



The

Criterion

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Support of faith, family helps Perry County parish thrive, page 7.

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Fall in France breaks teen's back, but not his or family's faith

By Natalie Hoefler

On July 6, 18-year-old Alex Kalscheur had only five days left of a two-week visit to France, staying with longtime family friends.

"He had just gotten his Eagle Scout Award [the highest level of Scouts BSA, formerly Boy Scouts of America], and was one of the youngest managers at McDonald's ever," says his mother, Amy Kalscheur. The trip to France was "a big celebration of several things. It was a big deal for him to visit them."



Alex Kalscheur

Earlier that day, Alex, a member of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, participated in First Friday Mass at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. While there, he purchased two rosaries and touched them to a relic believed to be Christ's crown of thorns, retrieved from Jerusalem by St. Helen in the fourth century.

That evening he and his hosts were enjoying a large gathering at a chateau in the Alps. Alex still had the two rosaries in his pocket when tragedy struck.

'It was 30 feet down'

"Alex said, 'Mom, it was so beautiful. The stars came out, and I wanted to see them better,'" says Kalscheur, repeating her son's recounting of the incident. "So he stepped up on a 2-foot wall and looked up.

"He doesn't remember how it happened, but he fell, and on the other side of the wall it was 30 feet down."

The fall fractured one of Alex's vertebrae and "imploded" another, Kalscheur says, sharing the explanation from the doctors in France.

She is in France now, staying as long as possible each day by Alex's side in the hospital where he is recuperating from back surgery. Kalscheur took time from her son's bedside to speak with *The Criterion* from the hospital.

"His hips seem to work, but he's losing movement a little," she reports. "His knees

See FRANCE, page 15



Kayci and Matt Mikrut process out of St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis after their wedding on Oct. 21, 2017. The couple wanted to be married in the church where their Catholic faith blossomed. (Photo provided courtesy of Jessica Strickland Photography)

Young couple finds their love and faith in God form a life-changing combination

Fifth part in a continuing series

By John Shaughnessy

It's a story of two people finding love—complete with the fun way they met, a memorable proposal and the beautiful commitment they have made.

On another level, the story of Matt and Kayci Mikrut also offers a look into the deep longings that young adults have, and the ways that the Church and the Catholic faith can help fulfill those desires.

So where to start—with the love that binds two people, or the faith that leads to a sense of community, a feeling of belonging and a relationship with God?

For Matt and Kayci, there's no need to make a choice. Their hope, their belief—as a young married couple of nine months—is that love and faith can thrive side by side, helping both to deepen.

The first chapters of their story once again reveal how love supported by faith and faith supported by love form a powerful, life-changing combination.

Making the connection—love

Matt and Kayci first became aware of each other before a game of flag football in November of 2013. Both were in the early parts of their careers at the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) headquarters in Indianapolis when Kayci was asked to be a substitute on Matt's team in the NCAA's intramural league.

"I was warming up and stretching, and she caught my eye," recalls Matt, who also caught two touchdown passes from Kayci when she played quarterback during the game.

Their connection grew through their shared passion in sports, with their first date being

See FAITH, page 8

Rich heritage: Black sisters, priests mark 50 years of shaping Catholic Church in the United States

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Fifty years ago, Josephite Father William Norvel thought it was time for black priests to come together.

The year, 1968, was a tumultuous one in American history. The country was struggling to implement civil rights for blacks, protests of the Vietnam War became common and some were violent, and young people rejected the authority of their parents' generation.

The black priests wanted to support each other. They also wanted to discuss how to respond to the times and gain the Church's backing to better evangelize black communities.



Fr. Kenneth Taylor

More importantly, they wanted to confront the racism they were experiencing within the Church. The priests wanted to feel accepted for who they were: African-American clergy who could share a rich cultural heritage, but were feeling suppressed by white-dominated Church leadership.

Father William and dozens of black priests met in Detroit in April in the first meeting of the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus. The meeting came soon after the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated. Questions abounded in the minds of the priests.

"I felt at that time we needed to bring to the attention of the Church the racism experienced in our seminaries and in our Church," said Father William, now 82 and retired in Atlanta, recalling that first gathering.

See CAUCUS, page 10



An African-American woman religious consults with a priest in an undated photo at the National Black Sisters' Conference headquarters in Washington. (CNS photo/courtesy the Josephites)



New initiative

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson offers opening remarks before saying a prayer at the Palliative and Hospice Care Conference at Marian University in Indianapolis on June 26. The conference was the first event of a new initiative of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Franciscan Health and St. Vincent Health that will provide education and resources for those who accompany individuals and their families through chronic illness, suffering and the end stages of life. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler)

Lawmaker urges protecting religious liberty of adoption, foster agencies

WASHINGTON (CNS)—An amendment sponsored by a congressman from Alabama and approved by the House Appropriations Committee on July 11 aims to protect Catholic and other faith-based agencies that choose, based on their religious conviction, not to place children with same-sex couples for adoption or foster care.

“As co-chairman of the House Coalition on Adoption, my goal was straightforward: to encourage states to include all experienced and licensed child welfare agencies so that children are placed in caring, loving homes where they can thrive,” Rep. Robert Aderholt, R-Alabama, said in a statement. “We need more support for these families and children in crisis, not less.”

Aderholt noted that in several states and localities across the country, governments are not allowing religious organizations to operate child welfare agencies.

The amendment to an upcoming funding bill would require the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to withhold 15 percent of federal funds for child welfare services from states and localities that discriminate against these agencies.

Over the past several years, government actions in Boston, San Francisco, the District of Columbia and the state of Illinois have prompted

local Catholic Charities agencies to stop providing adoption or foster care services because the agencies would not violate Church teaching and place children with same-sex or unmarried heterosexual couples.

The most recent example has occurred in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, where in March, the city of Philadelphia’s Department of Human Services froze all new foster care placements with the archdiocese’s Catholic Social Services (CSS). On average, the Catholic agency serves 127 foster children a day placed with more than 100 families in the city.

At issue is a long-standing practice of CSS not to perform evaluations of the homes of same-sex couples wishing to care for foster children, and instead to refer the required process to one of seven other foster agencies contracted by the city’s Department of Human Services.

Providing such care for more than a century, the agency adheres to Catholic teaching that opposes same-sex marriage and affirms marriage as a sacrament reserved only to one man and one woman.

The city’s decision also affects foster care services provided by Bethany Christian Services, a global nonprofit that operates in 36 states. The organization and CSS have contracted with the city on foster care since the late 1990s. †



Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

July 2018

July 21-23
2018 Permanent Diaconate Congress,
New Orleans

July 24-25
Saint Meinrad Alumni Mass and
dinner, St. Meinrad

July 30 — 5:30 p.m.
Knights and Ladies of the
Holy Sepulchre annual Bishops’ Mass
and dinner, St. Luke the Evangelist
Church, Indianapolis

(Schedule subject to change.)

Tennessee’s Catholic bishops urge governor to halt upcoming executions

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (CNS)—Bishops J. Mark Spalding of Nashville, Richard F. Stika of Knoxville and Martin D. Holley of Memphis have written to Gov. Bill Haslam urging him to “use your authority as governor to put an end to the fast-track executions planned” in the state of Tennessee in the upcoming months.

“It is within your power to establish your legacy as a governor of Tennessee who did not preside over an execution on your watch,” the state’s three Catholic bishops wrote.

The last person to be put to death by lethal injection in Tennessee was Cecil Johnson in 2009, when Phil Bredesen was governor. The state has carried out a total of six executions since 1976, five of those during Bredesen’s tenure.

In Tennessee, the governor has sole authority to grant clemency to death-row inmates.

There are currently 62 men and one woman on Tennessee’s death row.

The next man scheduled to be executed by the state is Billy Ray Irick on Aug. 9. Irick, 59, who has a history of serious mental illness, was convicted in 1986 of the rape and murder of a 7-year-old Knox County girl named Paula Dyer, and has been on death row for more than three decades.

In their letter to Haslam, the bishops called for mercy, including for those who have committed terrible crimes. “We join with many other religious denominations in firm opposition to the execution of even those convicted of heinous crimes,” they wrote.

The bishops thanked Haslam for meeting with them in the past, and for his willingness to learn more about the Church’s opposition to capital punishment and the foundations of that teaching.

In their letter, the bishops recalled the story of St. John Paul II’s visit to St. Louis in 1999, when he called for an end to the death penalty as both cruel and unnecessary. The pope said, “It is simply not necessary as the only means to protect society while still providing a just punishment for those who break civil laws,” the bishops wrote in their letter. “Rather than serving as a path to justice, the death penalty contributes to the growing disrespect for human life.”

The bishops’ letter to the governor comes at the same time that a trial begins over Tennessee’s new lethal injection protocol. More than 30 death-row inmates filed suit against the state, contending that the new three-drug combination—midazolam, vecuronium bromide

and potassium chloride—used in the lethal-injection protocol amounts to cruel and unusual punishment.

Tennessee has not used this three-drug cocktail to carry out an execution before, but similar or identical drug combinations were used in botched executions in other states, according to the death-row inmates’ attorneys.

The lethal-injection drug trial began on July 9. With that underway and Irick’s execution date set for Aug. 9, the state’s capital punishment system is facing renewed scrutiny. The state’s Catholic bishops are not the only ones voicing their opposition to it.

The national organization Conservatives Concerned About the Death Penalty earlier this month named Nashville resident Hannah Cox its new national manager, and is expanding its coalition of conservative lawmakers and constituents who are “questioning whether capital punishment is consistent with conservative principles and values due to the system’s inefficiency, inequity and inaccuracy.”

Cox, formerly with the Beacon Center of Tennessee, a free-market think tank, said in a statement, “Ending the death penalty aligns perfectly with my conservative beliefs because it eliminates the risk of executing innocent people, reduces costs to taxpayers, and is consistent with valuing life.”

Three men have been released from Tennessee’s death row in recent years after they were proven innocent. Paul House, who was exonerated by DNA evidence after spending 22 years on death row, has written an open petition to ask the state not to pursue Irick’s execution or any execution, noting the risk of executing an innocent person.

In June, the American Bar Association released a study titled “Potential Cost-Savings of a Severe Mental Illness Exclusion from the Death Penalty: An Analysis of Tennessee Data,” which noted that the state could save an estimated \$1.4 million to \$1.8 million per year by adopting a ban on capital punishment for defendants with severe mental illness.

The report stated that if defendants with severe mental illness were excluded from the death penalty, this “could result in cost savings because a subset of individuals could face expensive capital prosecutions, and decades of appeals would become ineligible” for capital punishment. †



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All eyes now fixed on Kavanaugh and *Roe v. Wade* decision

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Brett Kavanaugh, the federal judge who is the newly announced Supreme Court nominee, has stepped into a firestorm. Some have praised his nomination, others have slammed it, hinging primarily on how they think he will vote on abortion cases.

This contention was on full display on July 9 hours before President Donald J. Trump announced he was his pick to fill the vacancy on the court left by Justice Anthony Kennedy's retirement. A crowd assembled on the steps of the Supreme Court with signs, placards and bullhorns for and against the court's 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion.

Emotions ran high about the possibility of this decision being overturned since Trump promised he would appoint pro-life justices to do this during his presidential campaign.

For many, Kavanaugh's nomination seems to sound a death knell to *Roe*, but not everyone sees it this way. Some in the pro-life community lobbied against him saying he wouldn't do enough to overturn the decision, and many legal experts are now advising calm before the storm saying it is unlikely his vote alone would do something drastic to laws already in place.

For starters, any case the court takes on requires an initial four-vote-approval by the court. It is also unlikely the court would face a specific case with the potential to overturn *Roe*, said Francis Beckwith, a professor of philosophy and church-state studies at Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

Beckwith, who happened to be in Washington the night of Kavanaugh's announcement, watched the White House proceedings on his phone while observing demonstrators at the Supreme Court.

The opinions, both for and against Kavanaugh, are "all speculation now," he told Catholic News Service (CNS), adding that certainly Kavanaugh, if he gets the votes, will add a conservative tilt to the bench. To determine how he might rule in specific cases will be unearthed in upcoming hearings and in looking through his "long paper trail" of opinions, he said.

Beckwith is confident Kavanaugh will pass Senate muster since he was already

thoroughly questioned when he was nominated to his current role as federal judge.

At that time, 12 years ago, he was asked by Sen. Chuck Schumer, D-New York, if he considered *Roe v. Wade* an "abomination."

In response, Kavanaugh said: "If confirmed to the D.C. Circuit, I would follow *Roe v. Wade* faithfully and fully. That would be binding precedent of the court."

When pressed for his personal opinion, he didn't directly answer, but instead said the Supreme Court had upheld *Roe* "repeatedly," and that it would not be "appropriate for me to give a personal view of that case."

The difference now, Beckwith pointed out, is that Kavanaugh can no longer essentially rely on the Supreme Court's ruling since he will be asked what he would do on this court.

Standing by rulings already decided, or "*stare decisis*," the Latin phrase the court likes to use, may likely be Kavanaugh's continued approach.

Jerald Podair, history professor and the Robert S. French professor of American studies at Lawrence University in Appleton, Wis., said Kavanaugh's confirmation will "indeed come down to the abortion issue" and to the two possible swing votes from Sens. Susan Collins, R-Maine, and Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, who approved him for the Court of Appeals.

"If he says the right things about '*stare decisis*' on *Roe* without venturing into the details," he said, Kavanaugh should win confirmation.

As his court opinions and rulings are carefully scoured, his dissent in a case about a pregnant immigrant minor seeking an abortion, will certainly get a closer look.

In the ruling, the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals said the teenager in an immigrant detention center was entitled to seek an abortion. Kavanaugh's dissent criticized the decision, saying it gave immigrant minors a right to "immediate abortion on demand," but he urged the government to transfer her to private custody so she could do "as she wished." He said delaying the

Francis Beckwith, a professor of philosophy and Church-state studies at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, thinks this current mix of religious traditions in the court could have something to do with the emphasis on law in both faiths: canon law in the Catholic Church and the Talmudic law in the Jewish tradition. But he also said the study of law and medicine was something the second generation of Catholic and Jewish immigrants sought as professions.

Richard Garnett, professor and associate dean at Notre Dame Law School in northern Indiana, has periodically written about or been interviewed on the topic of Catholics in the nation's high court for the past decade. He thinks the current influx of Catholics simply reflects that they were suitable candidates for Republican presidents because of the Catholic pro-life stance.

Sotomayor was the exception, appointed by President Barack Obama. In a 2013 interview with *The New York Times*, she described herself as a "very spiritual person" although she added: "maybe not traditionally religious in terms of Sunday Mass every week, that sort of thing."

For most of the court's history, its justices were primarily Protestant, with only a smattering of Catholics.

Garnett outlined the history of Catholics in the court in a 2006 article for Cushman Center for the Study of American Catholicism at the University of Notre Dame.

According to his research, 12 Catholic justices have served on the Supreme Court and one more, Justice Sherman Minton, became Catholic after he retired. The first Catholic named to the court was Chief Justice Roger Taney, appointed by President Andrew Jackson in 1836. He is principally remembered for writing the Dred Scott decision upholding slavery.

Catholics and the U.S. Supreme Court

	Brett Kavanaugh Nominated	Clarence Thomas	Ruth Bader Ginsburg	Stephen Breyer	John Roberts Chief Justice	Samuel Alito	Sonia Sotomayor	Elena Kagan	Neil Gorsuch
Took the bench:	—	1991	1993	1994	2005	2006	2009	2010	2017
Age:	53	70	85	79	63	68	64	58	50
Born:	DC	GA	NY	CA	NY	NJ	NY	NY	CO
Law School:	Yale	Yale	Columbia (also attended Harvard)	Harvard	Harvard	Yale	Yale	Harvard	Harvard
Religion:	Catholic	Catholic	Jewish	Jewish	Catholic	Catholic	Catholic	Jewish	Episcopal (Raised Catholic)

Source: Catholic News Service and The Texas Catholic/Michael Gresham

Biographical highlights of the current sitting justices of the U.S. Supreme Court and nominee Judge Brett Kavanaugh, picked by President J. Donald Trump on July 9 to fill the vacancy left by retiring Justice Anthony Kennedy. (CNS graphic/Michael Gresham, The Texas Catholic)

procedure until she could be released to a U.S. sponsor would not impose an undue burden on the government's decision.

Another potential clue to his views on *Roe* stems from his remarks at the White House the night his nomination was announced when he said: "My judicial philosophy is straightforward. A judge must be independent and must interpret the law, not make the law."

Amid the noise on both sides of this issue, some have said it is unlikely *Roe* will be overturned if Kavanaugh does replace Kennedy on the court, and even if the decision is overturned it won't be as dramatic as some are predicting.

Days before Kavanaugh was announced as a court nominee, *America* magazine ran an article, "What would happen if *Roe v. Wade* were overturned?" It quoted Richard Doerflinger, former associate director of pro-life activities at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and current fellow at the University of Notre Dame Center for Ethics and Culture, as saying it was unlikely this would happen.

But if it did, he said, "the decision by itself would not lead to any restrictions on

abortion, but would allow for more debate on the issue."

In other words, he added: "The result would likely be different in different states, and different in the same state from one year to another, as with most issues in our democracy."

Similarly, Kenneth Craycraft, an attorney and Catholic theologian, said in an opinion piece for *The Cincinnati Enquirer* newspaper, that reversing the court's decision would "return the debate about the legality and regulation of abortion to the states, where it was before *Roe*, and where it belongs."

"But, as a practical matter, the abortion landscape would remain largely unchanged in many parts of the country, containing a large percentage of the population," he explained. "States already disposed to grant abortion rights will codify that protection. States predisposed to regulating access to abortion through 'heartbeat' bills, or laws related to access to full-scale health care management will continue to do so, except without the expense and burden of having to fight it out in federal courts, where it does not belong." †

If confirmed, Kavanaugh will keep Catholic majority in Supreme Court

WASHINGTON (CNS)—When Brett Kavanaugh took to the podium on July 9 at the White House after being introduced as President Donald J. Trump's Supreme Court nominee, he revealed, among other things, that his Catholic faith is a big part of his life.

He spoke about coaching his daughters' Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) basketball teams, serving the homeless with a priest in the audience who used to be his pastor, following the motto of his Jesuit high school to be "a man for others" and being "part of the vibrant Catholic community in the [Washington] D.C. area."

The frank discussion of his Catholicism probably wasn't shocking for many court-watchers who may already

have known that three of the four candidates who were on Trump's top list of potential nominees—Kavanaugh and Judges Amy Coney Barrett and Thomas Hardiman—are Catholic.

And if Kavanaugh is confirmed by the Senate, he will not only replace retiring Justice Anthony Kennedy, who is Catholic, but he also will join four other Catholic justices already on the bench—Chief Justice John Roberts and Justices Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito and Sonia Sotomayor.

Judge Neil Gorsuch, who was raised Catholic but now attends an Episcopal church with his family, attended the same Catholic high school as Kavanaugh—Georgetown Prep in Maryland. He filled the vacancy left by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia, who was Catholic.

The other justices on the court: Elena Kagan, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer are Jewish.

After Taney left the court, another Catholic, Chief Justice Edward White, was not named to the bench for another 30 years. In the early 1900s, White and Justice Joseph McKenna were on the court at the same time. They were followed by Justice Pierce Butler, appointed in 1923, and Justice Frank Murphy, appointed in 1940. The "Catholic seat" then sat empty for seven years until 1956 when Justice William Brennan joined the court.

Scalia overlapped with Brennan for four years and then came the current Catholic justices. Clarence Thomas was raised Catholic and went to a Catholic college and the seminary, but at the time of his appointment in 1991, he was not a practicing Catholic. He came back to the Church a few years later.

These nominees faced scrutiny for their Catholic faith. President Franklin Roosevelt promised that Murphy would "not let religion stand in his way," which Murphy reiterated in Senate hearings, saying his faith and vocation were kept "in air-tight compartments." In Thomas' hearings, even though he was attending services at an Episcopal church at the time, he was questioned if he would be independent from the pope, since he had attended Catholic schools.

Roberts and Alito also were questioned about their Catholic faith, but not extensively grilled on it, which some saw as a victory over anti-Catholicism that had been part of America's history.

"Catholics bring to the court a greater sensitivity and understanding of the human condition," said Joshua Sandman, professor of political science at the University of New Haven in Connecticut. He said over the years Catholic justices

have not been "chosen specifically for the Supreme Court because they were Catholic. They were chosen because of their capability and ideological preference of the president who selected them. They happened to be Catholic."

Robert Hume, a political science professor and chair of the department at Fordham University in New York, similarly called it a coincidence that Kavanaugh is Catholic, noting: "It mattered more that he was one of Justice Kennedy's clerks."

As far as how Catholics will view Kavanaugh, he said it is difficult to say because of the wide range of Catholic views. He also said it would be "interesting to see if Judge Kavanaugh's jurisprudence embraces all of the tenets of Catholic doctrine, or just some of them."

John Vile, professor of political science and dean of the University Honors College at Middle Tennessee State University, said Kavanaugh's nomination, like Gorsuch's, had more to do with being perceived as "social conservative voices."

He said people often associate Catholics with opposition to abortion, but he noted that Brennan was a strong supporter of *Roe v. Wade*, the court's decision legalizing abortion.

Brennan was considered a primary influence in the Supreme Court's 7-2 *Roe* decision, although he did not write the majority opinion. A 1993 biography of him says the "Catholic Church hierarchy was livid over Brennan's vote."

"Religious identification does not always indicate judicial decisions, especially among justices who value '*stare decisis*,'" Vile said, using the Latin phrase the court uses that means standing by rulings already decided. †

See related reflection, page 4.



The Criterion

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Editorial



Pope Francis waves as he leads the *Angelus* from the window of his studio overlooking St. Peter's Square on July 15 at the Vatican. (CNS photo/Fabio Frustaci, EPA)

Embrace your vocation as a missionary disciple

The summer months are a time to relax, slow down and recharge, but our vocation as missionary disciples is a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week, 365-day-a-year endeavor.

And as he has done on countless occasions, Pope Francis reiterated that fact before reciting the *Angelus* on July 15 before an estimated 15,000 people gathered in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican.

Commenting on the day's Gospel reading (Mk 6:7-13), the pope reflected on how Jesus sent the disciples out two-by-two to preach and to heal in his name.

"It was a kind of apprenticeship for what they would be called to do with the power of the Holy Spirit after the resurrection of the Lord," Pope Francis explained.

Speaking only in the name of Jesus, he added, "the Apostles had nothing of their own to proclaim and none of their own abilities to demonstrate, but they spoke and acted as emissaries, as messengers of Jesus."

Like the first disciples, the pope said all Christians are called to be missionaries and should be concerned more with sharing the Gospel than with earning money or even with being successful at winning converts.

"A baptized person who does not feel the need to proclaim the Gospel, to announce Christ, is not a good Christian," the pope said.

Those words should challenge us not only in the lazy, hazy days of summer, but every day.

Our faith teaches us that evangelization must be at the heart of all we say and do—with our families, friends, co-workers, fellow parishioners and, yes, even those we don't see eye to eye with. Pope Francis says as much.

"This Gospel episode concerns us, too, and not only priests, but all the baptized, who are called to witness to

the Gospel of Christ in all the situations of life," the pope said.

Each of us can no doubt think of a situation or two—locally, nationally or around the world—where messengers of Jesus are desperately needed to bring Christ to a situation where faith is not at the forefront or even included in a discussion.

Christians fulfill their mission, the Holy Father said, when their proclamation is motivated only by love for and obedience to Christ, and when the only message they share is Christ's.

When Jesus tells his disciples in the Gospel "to take nothing for the journey but a walking stick—no food, no sack, no money in their belts" (Mk 6:8), Pope Francis notes the poverty and simplicity of their lifestyle was meant to make those disciples—and us as well if we follow in their footsteps—"free and light."

Jesus, the pope added, calls his disciples to set out as "messengers of the kingdom of God, not powerful managers, not unmovable functionaries [and] not stars on tour."

We must remember that, despite our efforts as messengers of Jesus, achieving our goals is not always guaranteed. Although all the baptized are sent out on mission by Christ, they go with no guarantee of success, the pope said. "This, too, is poverty: the experience of failure."

Let us pray for the courage to embrace our vocation as missionary disciples, to be faithful messengers of Jesus, and to not be afraid to share the Gospel at all times.

And, like Pope Francis, we pray that Mary, "the first disciple and missionary of the word of God, would help us bear the message of the Gospel in the world with a humble and radiant exultation that goes beyond every refusal, misunderstanding or tribulation."

—Mike Krokos

Reflection/Sean Gallagher

Faith can be a support to achieve equality for all under the law

Many Catholics and other people of faith were encouraged when President Donald J. Trump introduced Judge Brett Kavanaugh on July 9 as his nominee to succeed the

retiring Justice Anthony Kennedy on the U.S. Supreme Court.

Kavanaugh takes his Catholic faith seriously. In his remarks after the president announced him as his nominee, Kavanaugh said that he uses as a guide

for his life the motto of the Jesuit boys high school from which he graduated, "Men for others."

Today, he does this by serving meals to the homeless in Washington in a Catholic Charities program. He proclaims the word of God as a lector during Mass in his parish. He also seeks to pass on the lessons of faith to others through mentoring, teaching and serving as a Catholic Youth Organization basketball coach for teams on which his two daughters are players.

More broadly, Kavanaugh has been a "man for others" in his years dedicated to public service as a legal professional. He is a good man seeking holiness. We, as Catholics in America, can be grateful for that.

We should want our judges to be good people seeking holiness. But we should also want them to be good judges seeking to be faithful to the law and the Constitution. And while people of various faiths or no faith at all can be good judges in this way, the Judeo-Christian tradition gives support to these principles.

God gave the Hebrew people his law through Moses on Mount Sinai. Unlike other peoples of that time who were ruled by the capricious will of self-interested strong men, the Hebrews were ruled by God's law, which applied equally to everyone.

The most fundamental aspects of that law are timeless and relevant to

people in all times and places. They are what subsequent philosophers and theologians have called the "natural law" and are, in part, enshrined in the Ten Commandments.

These are laws reflective of the nature of humanity and of the universe as a whole created by God. In his mercy, he revealed them to us more clearly in the law he gave to Moses so that, in guiding our lives by them with the help of his grace, we can achieve some degree of happiness in this life and experience infinite happiness in the next.

The founders of the United States were diverse in the faith they professed. But in framing the Constitution, they were united in believing that the citizens of their new country should be ruled equally by law and not the tyrants from which many of those who settled the 13 colonies had sought to escape.

While not based in the specific teachings of one faith community or another, the laws of the United States in some important ways reflect the natural law that applies to everyone equally. When judges seek to be faithful to the Constitution and our country's laws as they are written, they serve all people well and do not favor one group over another. By his judicial track record, Kavanaugh would appear to be just such a judge.

Some laws may need to be changed so that all people may be treated more fairly in our society. The place for that to happen, though, is through the democratic process set up by our Constitution and not in our courts. Let legislators who represent those who elected them work out the text of our laws, and judges simply be faithful to the laws as they were written.

All of us who are Christians can further equality under the law by seeking to be fair to everyone we meet and in advocating for laws that are fair to everyone.

(Sean Gallagher is a reporter for The Criterion.) †

Letter to the Editor

St. Lawrence parishioners see face of God in others through twinning relationship

In the July 6 issue of *The Criterion*, there appeared a lengthy article on the "blessings of parish twinning."

I wish to add to that article. St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg has had a twinning relationship with San Luis Parish in San Luis, Guatemala, for 18 years. Our sister parish, San Luis, has approximately 100 missions throughout the Peten, the northwestern part of Guatemala. This area was subject to much violence and death at the time of the military rule. Many Quechi Indians lost their lives, and many were uprooted. These humble people are very poor and very religious, as St. Lawrence parishioners have discovered through the years.

St. Lawrence has made four trips to San Luis over these years. The latest was three years ago when our former pastor, Father Peter Gallagher, visited with three parishioners. The priests of San Luis have also visited St. Lawrence four times.

The current San Luis pastor, Father Filomeno Ceja, visited a year and a half ago, and he movingly spoke at all the Masses and to the school children about the people of San Luis and the appreciation and joy to have a relationship with the people of St. Lawrence and also the good that has resulted.

St. Lawrence prays for San Luis on a regular basis, and the people of San Luis pray for St. Lawrence.

Over the years, St. Lawrence has helped to establish a health clinic, supported

health programs, supported the education of children, helped in the construction of mission churches, and supported the cost of transportation and fuel for the priest's visits to the many missions.

Many blessings have flowed to the people of St. Lawrence from this relationship. A greater vision of Church has happened, the faith of the Guatemalan people has been a model to St. Lawrence, the visits have deepened the faith of all, lives have been improved, and God has been seen in the faces of others.

Ron Stegman
Guilford

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be informed, relevant, well-expressed, concise, temperate in tone, courteous and respectful.

The editors reserve the right to select and edit the letters based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content.

Letters must be signed, but, for serious reasons, names may be withheld.

Send letters to "Letters to the Editor," The Criterion, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.



Christ the Cornerstone

Beatitudes show us how to become holy by what we do

“Jesus explained with great simplicity what it means to be holy when he gave us the Beatitudes [cf. Mt 5:3-12; Lk 6:20-23]. The Beatitudes are like a Christian’s identity card. So if anyone asks: ‘What must one do to be a good Christian?’ the answer is clear. We have to do, each in our own way, what Jesus told us in the Sermon on the Mount” (Pope Francis, “Gaudete et Exsultate,” #63).

Chapter three of Pope Francis’s apostolic exhortation *“Gaudete et Exsultate”* (“Rejoice and Be Glad”) contains an extended and powerful reflection on the Beatitudes.

The pope tells us that “the Beatitudes are in no way trite or undemanding, quite the opposite.” They clearly run counter to the way the world teaches us to live. “We can only practice them if the Holy Spirit fills us with his power and frees us from our weakness, our selfishness, our complacency and our pride” (#65).

Space limitations make it impossible to address the pope’s insights into each of the Beatitudes. I strongly urge everyone to read prayerfully *“Gaudete et Exsultate,”* and to pay special attention to the Holy Father’s reflections on the Beatitudes in chapter

three. Here he outlines for us a clear and compelling formula for holiness:

- Being poor of heart: that is holiness.
- Reacting with meekness and humility: that is holiness.
- Knowing how to mourn with others: that is holiness.
- Hungering and thirsting for righteousness: that is holiness.
- Seeing and acting with mercy: that is holiness.
- Keeping a heart free of all that tarnishes love: that is holiness.
- Sowing peace all around us: that is holiness.
- Accepting daily the path of the Gospel, even though it may cause us problems: that is holiness.

Holiness means dedicating ourselves wholeheartedly to following the words and example of Jesus. This is the witness of the saints. They were not perfect in their efforts to practice the Beatitudes, but they sought and received the Lord’s forgiveness whenever they failed to live up to them, and they persevered, relying on the power of the Holy Spirit.

In the end, Pope Francis reminds us that there is only one criterion for holiness.

It is the Lord’s powerful words in the 25th chapter of St. Matthew’s Gospel:

“I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you welcomed me; I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me; I was in prison and you visited me” (Mt 25:31-46).

These are uncompromising demands, the pope says. “Holiness, then, is not about swooning in mystic rapture.” If we want to be holy and take our rightful place among the communion of saints, we must acknowledge and accept the words of Jesus “in a spirit of genuine openness,” and “without any ifs or buts that could lessen their force” (#97).

Holiness is not ideological, elitist or selective in its application of the Lord’s teaching. We cannot be poor of heart and act without mercy. Nor can we be for peace without hungering and thirsting for justice. We cannot be pro-life and refuse to welcome strangers. As Pope Francis says:

“Our defense of the innocent unborn, for example, needs to be clear, firm and passionate, for at stake is the dignity of a human life, which is always sacred and demands love for each person, regardless of his or her stage of

development. Equally sacred, however, are the lives of the poor, those already born, the destitute, the abandoned and the underprivileged, the vulnerable infirm and elderly exposed to covert euthanasia, the victims of human trafficking, new forms of slavery, and every form of rejection. We cannot uphold an ideal of holiness that would ignore injustice in a world where some revel, spend with abandon and live only for the latest consumer goods, even as others look on from afar, living their entire lives in abject poverty” (#101).

These are harsh, unsettling words, but they flow directly from the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount and in the 25th chapter of St. Matthew’s Gospel quoted above.

All of us are called to be holy. We don’t have to be heroic, but we do have to take the demands of Jesus seriously in our daily lives. “Jesus’ words are few and straightforward, yet practical and valid for everyone,” Pope Francis says. “For Christianity is meant above all to be put into practice” (#109).

Holiness is what we do in Jesus’ name. Let’s pray that the power of the Holy Spirit will help us follow faithfully the Lord’s commands. †



Cristo, la piedra angular

Las bienaventuranzas nos enseñan a ser santos mediante nuestras obras

“Jesús explicó con toda sencillez qué es ser santos, y lo hizo cuando nos dejó las bienaventuranzas [cf. Mt 5:3-12; Lc 6:20-23]. Son como el carnet de identidad del cristiano. Así, si alguno de nosotros se plantea la pregunta: ‘¿Cómo se hace para llegar a ser un buen cristiano?’ la respuesta es sencilla: es necesario hacer, cada uno a su modo, lo que dice Jesús en el sermón de las bienaventuranzas” (Papa Francisco, “Gaudete et Exsultate,” #63).

El capítulo tres de la exhortación apostólica del papa Francisco, titulada *“Gaudete et Exsultate”* (“Alegraos y regocijaos”) contiene una reflexión amplia y poderosa sobre las bienaventuranzas.

El papa nos dice que “las bienaventuranzas de ninguna manera son algo liviano o superficial; al contrario.” Esto va contracorriente con respecto a la forma en que el mundo nos enseña a vivir. *“Solo podemos vivirlas si el Espíritu Santo nos invade con toda su potencia y nos libera de la debilidad del egoísmo, de la comodidad, del orgullo”* (#65).

Por cuestiones de limitación de espacio resulta imposible abordar los comentarios del papa con respecto a cada una de las bienaventuranzas, por lo que exhorto a cada uno de ustedes a que lean *“Gaudete et Exsultate”*

con actitud piadosa y presten especial atención a las reflexiones del Santo Padre sobre las bienaventuranzas en el capítulo tres. Allí detalla una fórmula clara y convincente para alcanzar la santidad:

- Ser pobre en el corazón, esto es santidad.
- Reaccionar con humilde mansedumbre, esto es santidad.
- Saber llorar con los demás, esto es santidad.
- Buscar la justicia con hambre y sed, esto es santidad.
- Mirar y actuar con misericordia, esto es santidad.
- Mantener el corazón limpio de todo lo que mancha el amor, esto es santidad.
- Sembrar paz a nuestro alrededor, esto es santidad.
- Aceptar cada día el camino del Evangelio aunque nos traiga problemas, esto es santidad.

La santidad significa dedicarnos enteramente a seguir la palabra y el ejemplo de Jesús. Este es el testimonio de los santos quienes no fueron perfectos en sus esfuerzos de practicar las bienaventuranzas pero buscaron y recibieron el perdón del Señor siempre que no lograron cumplirlas y perseveraron, confiando en el poder del Espíritu Santo.

Al final, el papa Francisco nos recuerda que solo existe un criterio para la santidad que se encuentra en

las poderosas palabras del Señor en el capítulo 25 del Evangelio según San Mateo:

“Tuve hambre, y ustedes me dieron de comer; tuve sed, y me dieron de beber; fui forastero, y me dieron alojamiento; necesité ropa, y me vistieron; estuve; enfermo y me atendieron; estuve en la cárcel, y me visitaron” (Mt 25:31-46).

El papa nos dice que estas son exigencias ineludibles. “Ser santos no significa blanquear los ojos en un supuesto éxtasis.” Si deseamos ser santos y ocupar nuestro justo lugar en la comunión de los santos, debemos reconocer y aceptar las palabras de Jesús “con sincera apertura” y “sin elucubraciones y excusas que les quiten fuerza” (#97).

La santidad no es algo ideológico, elitista o selectivo en cuanto a la aplicación de las enseñanzas del Señor. No podemos ser pobres de corazón y actuar sin misericordia, como tampoco podemos favorecer la paz si no sentimos hambre y sed de justicia; no podemos estar en favor de la vida y rehusarnos a recibir a los extranjeros. Tal como nos lo explica el papa Francisco:

“La defensa del inocente que no ha nacido, por ejemplo, debe ser clara, firme y apasionada, porque allí está en juego la dignidad de la vida humana, siempre sagrada, y lo exige el amor a cada persona más allá de su desarrollo.

Pero igualmente sagrada es la vida de los pobres que ya han nacido, que se debaten en la miseria, el abandono, la postergación, la trata de personas, la eutanasia encubierta en los enfermos y ancianos privados de atención, las nuevas formas de esclavitud, y en toda forma de descarte. No podemos plantearnos un ideal de santidad que ignore la injusticia de este mundo, donde unos festejan, gastan alegremente y reducen su vida a las novedades del consumo, al mismo tiempo que otros solo miran desde afuera mientras su vida pasa y se acaba miserablemente” (#101).

Se trata de palabras duras e inquietantes pero que fluyen directamente del discurso de Jesús en el Sermón de la Montaña y en el capítulo 25 del Evangelio según San Mateo que cité anteriormente.

Todos estamos llamados a la santidad. No tenemos que ser héroes pero sí debemos tomar muy en serio las exigencias de Jesús en nuestra vida cotidiana. “[Las de Jesús] son pocas palabras, sencillas, pero prácticas y válidas para todos— afirma el papa Francisco— porque el cristianismo es principalmente para ser practicado” (#109).

La santidad es aquello que hacemos en el nombre de Jesús. Recemos para que el poder del Espíritu Santo nos ayude a cumplir fielmente con los mandamientos del Señor. †

Events Calendar

For a list of events for the next four weeks as reported to The Criterion, log on to www.archindy.org/events.

July 22-28

St. Ambrose Parish, **food booth at Jackson County Fair** on S.R. 250, Brownstown, 2-10 p.m. Information: 812-522-5304.

July 26-28

St. Elizabeth Seton, 10655 Haverstick Road, Carmel (Lafayette Diocese). **SetonFest**, 6-11:45 p.m., rides, live music, laser tag, raffles, bingo, children's games, beer, casino, food trucks, Fri. car show, all-you-can-eat pasta dinner Sat., fireworks Fri. and Sat. Information: 317-846-3850, www.setoncarmel.org.

July 28

St. Mary Parish, 777 S. 11th St., Mitchell. **Hog Roast and Indoor Yard Sale**, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., pulled pork dinners with sides, children's games, door prizes, silent auction. Information: 812-849-3570.

July 28-29

All Saints Parish, Dearborn County, St. Martin Campus, 8044 Yorkridge Road, Guilford. **Summer Festival**, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., \$12 chicken

dinners Sun. 11 a.m.-5 p.m., food stand, quilts, Last Supper religious exhibit, games, kiddie land, country store, beer garden, \$10,000 raffle. Information: 812-576-4302.

July 28-August 6

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Providence Spirituality and Conference Center, 1 Sisters of Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods. **Used Book Sale sponsored by Linden Leaf Gifts**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., books not pre-priced but donations accepted. Information: 812-535-2932 or lindenleafgifts@spsmw.org.

July 29

St. Augustine Parish, 18020 St. Lafayette St., Leopold. **Parish Picnic**, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. CT, fried chicken dinners, ice cream, big raffle, quilt raffle, silent auction, live entertainment, family games. Information: 812-843-5143.

August 2

St. Joan of Arc Church, 4217 Central Ave., Indianapolis. **Holy Hour of Prayer for Vocations**, 7-8 p.m.

Information: 317-236-1490, amiller@archindy.org.

August 3

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **First Friday** celebration of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Mass, 5:45 p.m., exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, following Mass until 9 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-888-2861 or info@olgreenwood.org.

St. Lawrence Church, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Charismatic Renewal Praise and Mass**, praise and worship 7 p.m., Mass 7:30 p.m. Information: 317-546-7328, mkeyes@indy.rr.com.

Women's Care Center, 4901 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Mass**, 5 p.m., Father John McCaslin presiding, optional tour of center to follow. Information: 317-829-6800, www.womenscarecenter.org.

August 3-4

St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, 523 S. Merrill St.,

Fortville. **Summer Festival**, Fri. 7-11 p.m., Monte Carlo, Sat. 11 a.m.-10 p.m., chicken and noodle dinners, walking tacos, burger and fries, lemon shake-ups, ice cream and desserts, children's games, raffle, quilt raffle, face painting. Information: 317-485-5102.

August 4

Primo Banquet and Conference Center, 2615 National Ave., Indianapolis. **Hearts and Hands of Indiana "Houses to Homes Dinner and Fundraiser,"** benefiting housing rehabilitation efforts near St. Anthony Parish in Indianapolis, 6-10 p.m., door prizes, raffles, audience games, silent auction, wine pull, \$100 ticket for two persons includes entrance, buffet dinner, beer, wine, soft drinks and one entry for \$5,000, \$1,500 and two \$500 drawings. Information and tickets: www.heartsandhandsindy.org/houses-to-homes.

St. Michael Church, 145 St. Michael Blvd., Brookville. **First Saturday Marian Devotional Prayer Group**, Mass, prayers, rosary,

confession, meditation, 8 a.m. Information: 765-647-5462.

August 5

St. Bernard Parish, 7600 Hwy. 337 N.W., Depauw. **Picnic and Raffle**, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., country fried chicken and ham dinners, homemade noodles and pies served in air-conditioned dining room until 2 p.m., carryout available, adult and children's games, 50/50 raffle, gun raffle, live music 11 a.m.-1 p.m., limit of 300 tickets at \$100 each for drawing for \$10,000, silent auction until 2:30 p.m., children's games, 50/50 raffle, handmade quilts, games of chance. Information or ticket purchase: 812-347-2326.

St. Boniface Parish, 15519 N. State Road 545, Fulda. **Summer Picnic**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. CT, fried chicken and roast beef dinners with homemade stuffing and desserts in air conditioning served 10 a.m.-2 p.m. CT, carryout available, soup sold by the bowl or in bulk, fried chicken sandwiches, grilled tenderloins, burgers, ice cream, homemade food items, games,

live music, shaded family fun area, guided tours of church. Information: 812-357-5533.

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Golden Jubilee Mass**, Archbishop Charles C. Thompson presiding, sponsored by the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life, 2 p.m. followed by reception in Assembly Hall of the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center. Registration required by July 30. Printable and online registration in English and Spanish: bit.ly/2JNZfcj (case sensitive). Information: Keri Carroll, 317-236-1521, kcarroll@archindy.org.

August 7

Mission 27 Resale, 132 Leota St., Indianapolis. **Senior Discount Day**, every Tuesday, seniors get 30 percent off all purchases, 9 a.m.-6 p.m., ministry supports Indianapolis St. Vincent de Paul Society Food Pantry and Changing Lives Forever program. Information: 317-687-8260. †

Fatima Retreat House to offer reflection on the Eucharist on Aug. 20 and 28

"A Celebration of the Eucharist" is the theme of a reflection being presented by Father James Farrell at Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis in August.

Retreatants can choose from a day or evening session:

- Aug. 20: 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
- Aug. 28: 5:30-9 p.m.

In addition to the presentation, there will be private time for prayer, walking the trails and fellowship with others

who want to deepen their relationship with Christ in the Eucharist.

The cost to attend on Aug. 20 is \$43, which includes a continental breakfast and lunch. On Aug. 28 the cost is \$38, which includes a light dinner.

Register online at www.archindy.org/fatima.

For additional information, call Dustin Nelson at 317-545-7681 or e-mail dnelson@archindy.org. †

Divorce and Beyond offered on Tuesdays on Aug. 14-Sept. 18 in Indianapolis

Divorce and Beyond, a ministry of the archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life, will be offered at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish, 7225 Southeastern Ave., in Indianapolis, from 7-9 p.m. on six consecutive Tuesdays from Aug. 14-Sept. 18.

The support group explores the stress, anger, blame and guilt of divorce with the goal of leading participants toward ultimate forgiveness, happiness and growth.

Separated or divorced persons of all faiths are welcome.

The cost of the six-week session is \$30, which includes materials. Scholarships are available.

Register online at www.archindy.org/marriageandfamily, then click on "Divorce Ministry." †

For more information, contact divorce and bereavement ministry coordinator Deb VanVelse at 317-236-1586, 800-382-9836, ext. 1586, or e-mail dvanvelse@archindy.org. †

Parish twinning conference planned in Nashville, Tenn., on Aug. 24-26

"One Are We ... The Blessings of Twinning" is the theme of a two-day conference and 40th anniversary celebration hosted by the Parish Twinning Program of the Americas (PTPA) at the Diocese of Nashville Catholic Pastoral Center, 2800 McGavock Pike, and The Inn at Opryland Hotel, 2401 Music Valley Dr., in Nashville, Tenn., from 1 p.m. on Aug. 24 through 11 a.m. on Aug. 26.

Individuals from Catholic parishes across the country—including from central and southern Indiana—are invited and encouraged to participate.

Participants will have the opportunity to share information and learn best practices for building spiritually enriching twinning relationships with impoverished parishes in Haiti and Latin America.

Ten "Best Practices" workshops will cover key topics related to twinning relationships, including microfinance and economic development, agriculture, clean water, medical and dental missions, technology, education, and sustainable business opportunities.

The cost to attend is \$239.37 per person.

The registration information, conference schedule and a list of keynote speakers can be found at www.parishprogram.org.

For additional information, contact PTPA at 615-298-3002.

For room reservations at The Inn at Opryland, call 615-889-0800 or 855-584-3466. The last day to book the special PTPA group rate of \$135 per night is July 27. †

Baby Box founder to speak on July 29

Baby Box founder Monica Kelsey will speak at a free lunch program at noon on July 29 at St. Mary Parish Center, 212 Washington St., in North Vernon.

Members of surrounding communities and the public are invited to attend.

Baby Box is designed to help women who want to give up their babies and have

nowhere else to turn. The design of the baby box is simple. They are built into the side of the building and are programmed to sense when a baby has been placed inside. An EMS alert is initiated when the door is opened and a baby placed inside, and the door is locked upon closing and cannot be reopened from the outside. †

VIPs



Jerry and Betsy (Kriider) Traub, members of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on July 20.

The couple was married at St. Lawrence Church in Lawrenceburg on July 20, 1968.

They have four children: Susan Baker, Jennifer Priser, Andy and Ben Traub.

The couple also has nine grandchildren. †



Otto and Marjorie (Stenger) Wietlisbach, members of St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Decatur County celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on July 19.

The couple was married in St. Michael Church in Brookville on July 19, 1958.

They have seven children: Anita Krieger, Rose McCormick, Barb Wilds, Alan, Bill, David and Paul Wietlisbach.

They also have 13 grandchildren and seven—soon to be eight—great-grandchildren.

The couple will celebrate with an open house with family and friends. †



"Drifts," by Keith Armstrong (Submitted photos)



"Mobra's 2," by Nancy Smith

Works of artists on display at Saint Meinrad Archabbey Library through Aug. 14

"Art of Discovery" is the title of an exhibit featuring the works of woodturning artist Keith Armstrong and photographer Nancy Smith at the Saint Meinrad Archabbey Library Gallery, 200 Hill Drive, in St. Meinrad, through Aug. 14.

Both artists are inspired by nature and work to discover its hidden beauty.

The exhibit is free and open to the public.

For library hours, call 812-357-6401, 800-987-7311, or visit www.saintmeinrad.edu/library/hours. †

Support of faith, family helps Perry County parish thrive through 50 years

By Sean Gallagher

PERRY COUNTY—The Catholic families who live near Bristow in the rolling hills of Perry County in southern Indiana have been a tight-knit family of faith at St. Isidore the Farmer Parish for 50 years.

The support of family and of faith was needed during the first days of the parish. It was founded when two older nearby Perry County parishes—St. John the Baptist and St. Joseph—were closed and merged, something that can challenge a person's faith.

Then, just weeks after the first Mass was celebrated in the parish, a fire and explosion happened on Jan. 10, 1969, that took the life of 23-year-old parishioner Martin Lasher and severely burned the parish's pastor, Father Ralph Staashelm, who died four days later.

According to an article in *The Criterion*, the explosion and fire were caused when varnish fumes were ignited by heat from an electric range in the rectory's kitchen. Lasher, engaged to be married at the time and recently discharged from service in the U.S. Army in Vietnam, was doing volunteer work in the rectory.

Father Staashelm initially escaped from the rectory unharmed, but went back in when he realized that Lasher was caught in the fire. That was when he sustained the burns that eventually took his life.

"Merging parishes is never easy," said Benedictine Father Luke Waugh, St. Isidore's administrator, of the difficulties during the start of the parish. "You can always do the best of planning, but then you have a tragedy such as this. It made it that much more difficult."

It was difficult, but not impossible. The Catholic families of the area stuck together in those challenging times to build a parish that is faith-filled and brimming with life.

"When you come to St. Isidore, you'll see a lot of young families," said Father Luke. "I'm in my early 50s, and I believe that there are no more than one or two people that are older than me on our parish council. The majority of them tend to have young families."

"They're very generous in the amount of time that they donate, putting sweat equity into the place. To me, that makes it stand out."

And it's been that way throughout the history of St. Isidore.

Hubert Harpenau, 85, is a founding member of the parish. Previously a member of St. Joseph Parish, he worked to build up support for the founding of St. Isidore 50 years ago.

"I'm proud of the parish," said Hubert, who lives with his wife Ruth Ann a few miles south of St. Isidore. "I've always done a lot of work for it. If I wasn't doing anything for myself, the first thing that I would think about was to work up there."

For many years, the couple led the organizing of St. Isidore's shooting match, its major social and fundraising event held annually on the third Sunday of October. The event features a target shooting competition popular with the many hunters of the area.

Both are glad to see so many young parents and their children take up helping with the parish like they did in its early days.

"We've got some good young families up there, and they're pulling together really good," Hubert said. "It's good for the future."

"It sows seeds for the children to take part in the Church and in their families," said Ruth Ann.

Sheila Borden, 47, has called St. Isidore her spiritual home her entire

life. A member of the parish council, a lector and catechist there, she also leads the committee that has organized the celebration of the parish's anniversary.

She experiences the family nature of St. Isidore, especially in the shooting match. Borden and the family in which she grew up oversee the country store that sells baked and other homemade goods at the event.

"I've done that for years," she said. "My mom is the chairperson of that stand. My family works it the whole day. There used to be a lady down the road that did it. Then she passed away, and my mom took over. So, I can foresee someday it will be me taking over. Just pass it on."

Like the faith that is passed on from one generation to the next.

That was on the mind of parishioner Rick Kleaving, 40, as he walked into the parish church on June 24 for a Mass to celebrate the anniversary. He came to the packed church with his wife and three young children.

"It's a great turnout for the day," said Kleaving, who volunteers with maintenance and grounds keeping at the parish. "It means everything to the parish as far as what we've grown up with. Hopefully, one day our children will grow up with it as well."

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson was principal celebrant at the Mass.

In his homily, he recalled how 1968 has been called "the year that shattered America." The war in Vietnam continued to rage, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and presidential candidate Robert Kennedy were assassinated that year.

"In the midst of all that uncertainty, all of those crises, all of that violence, the people of St. John and St. Joseph parishes came together in unity to form this parish of St. Isidore," Archbishop Thompson said. "I have to think that, in that year that shattered America, this parish foundation was a sign of hope, a sign of unity, a sign of what can happen when God's grace is at work in our lives."

Family members of Martin Lasher and Father Staashelm attended the Mass and spoke to *The Criterion* about how they have experienced the power of God's grace in the wake of the tragedy at St. Isidore that took their loved ones' lives.

"It's overwhelming," said Janet Staashelm, a sister-in-law of the founding pastor, of seeing so much life in St. Isidore today. "It's bittersweet, because of Ralph."

"But this church has gone on and many, many families have been raised here. I'm so glad," continued Staashelm, a member of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Clarksville.

More families have become a part of the broader family of faith at St. Isidore. On July 5, just days after the anniversary Mass, nearby St. Martin of Tours Parish in Siberia was merged into St. Isidore, much like the parish merger that led to the founding of St. Isidore 50 years ago.

Father Luke said the role that a parish merger had in the founding of St. Isidore will help the merger taking place now happen as smoothly as possible.



Tessa Guillaume, left, kneels in prayer during the June 24 anniversary Mass to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of St. Isidore the Farmer Parish in Perry County, with her parents, Stacey and Ty Guillaume, and her sister, Serena Guillaume. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson processes into St. Isidore the Farmer Church in Perry County on June 24 at the start of the Mass to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the parish.

"I think it helps us to be more aware and sensitive to individuals' thinking and feelings about it," he said. "So when we do planning, we try to be more inclusive."

Members of St. Martin serve on St. Isidore's anniversary committee, and the choir that sang at the anniversary Mass included members of the former Siberia faith community.

Archbishop Thompson encouraged everyone at the anniversary Mass to continue to be witnesses of faith both to each other and in the broader world.

"Our world today, just as in 1968, needs beacons of hope, signs of unity, witnesses to God's peace in the world," he said, "and that is what I pray St. Isidore will continue to be." †

I'm in my early 50s, and I believe that there are no more than one or two people that are older than me on our parish council. The majority of them tend to have young families. They're very generous in the amount of time that they donate, putting sweat equity into the place. To me, that makes it stand out.'



—Benedictine Father Luke Waugh, administrator of St. Isidore the Farmer Parish in Perry County

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FAITH

continued from page 1

on a golf course. And Matt began to think she could be “the one” when she enjoyed watching the five *Rocky* movies depicting the fictional underdog boxer Rocky Balboa from the streets of Philadelphia.

“Anything I wanted to do, she was game for it,” says Matt, now 31. “Everything we’re passionate about, we share.”

Kayci had the feeling of Matt being “the one” after he asked her to visit his family in Washington in the fall of 2014.

“I thought that was quick,” says Kayci, who is 28. “I remember very vividly seeing his mom and sister for the first time and thinking this could be my new family.”

That feeling was confirmed in April of 2015 when Matt told Kayci he loved her.

“The first time he told me he loved me I actually had goose bumps over my whole body.”

Making the connection—faith

Matt began to develop another deeper relationship in his life shortly after he moved to Indianapolis in June of 2013.

Living downtown, he started looking at different Catholic churches in the area. When he walked into St. John the Evangelist Church for the first time, it was during a period in his life when his commitment to the faith of his childhood and youth wasn’t that strong.

Initially, he missed as many Sunday Masses as he made at St. John, and he usually sat in the back of the church at the parish that is well-known for welcoming young adults. One Sunday, after the 8 a.m. Mass, he was approached by Father Rick Nagel, St. John’s pastor.

“Father Rick cornered me,” Matt recalls with a smile. “He started the conversation with interest in me as a person rather than

starting a conversation with me as a person of faith. That makes a big difference to people in their twenties.”

Eventually, the conversation between Matt and Father Nagel did turn to Matt’s faith life. He told the priest that he had been given the core foundation of his Catholic faith from his parents, but it wasn’t as deep at that point. It was an experience that Father Nagel could relate to, as he also had a period of distance from his faith as a young adult.

“When he looked at me, I think he saw a piece of himself from 20 years earlier,” Matt says. “He told me the door was always open to me.”

Matt began to enter the doors of St. John more frequently.

“From twice a month to three times a month to every week. I was committed again,” Matt says. “It was 100 percent Father Rick singling me out and making a connection with me.”

Matt then offered that connection to Kayci, who grew up as a Methodist and who attended services inconsistently as a young adult. He invited her to a Mass in 2014.

“I knew he went every week,” Kayci recalls about Matt. “I thought if I’m going to end up with this guy, I should go.”

A time of engagement—love

Matt made all the plans to propose to Kayci on Labor Day weekend of 2016.

It would take place near the Illinois community where Kayci grew up, a community called Orion. It would happen on a golf course, playing the game that had been their first date. It would also involve both their families, a testament to how close they are to them.

On that day, before Kayci and Matt played a round of golf with her father,

Matt gave a small box containing the engagement ring to Kayci’s younger brother Royce. Matt asked Royce to secretly put the box in the cup of the 18th hole before they teed off on that last hole of the course—where both families were watching from the clubhouse, ready to join what they hoped would be a celebration.

Royce was also responsible for placing a small sign near the 18th green, a sign that asked the question, “Kayci, will you marry me?”

It all fit into Matt’s plan to offer her the ring immediately after she read the sign. There was just one major hitch.

Kayci—who is both focused and competitive—lined up her putt before Matt could get the engagement ring from the cup.

“I’m sweating,” Matt recalls.

Kayci’s father came to the rescue, distracting his daughter by insisting that she read the sign just off the green, suggesting it was a notice from the golf course.

As Kayci strode toward the sign, Matt retrieved the ring. Then as she read the sign, Matt walked quickly toward her, knelt on one knee behind her and held out the ring in her direction. When Kayci turned to look for Matt, he gazed up at her and repeated the question on the sign.

Kayci’s eyes and face radiated with joy as she answered, “Yes! Of course!”

A time of engagement—faith

Just as there had been one potential major hitch in Matt’s proposal plan, Kayci thought there would be a similar hitch in her desire to join Matt in the Catholic faith.

“My mom is very religious. She’s the one behind our faith,” Kayci notes about growing up in her Methodist family.

So Kayci worried about what her mother would say when she asked, “Mom, would you care if I became Catholic?”

Kayci’s mother immediately gave her blessing.

“Mom was excited to hear that Matt was involved in his faith. She loved that he goes to church every weekend, and that he calls his mom every day.

“It was a no-brainer for me to become Catholic because we were going to raise our family that way.”

Kayci first planned to go through the Church’s Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults program (RCIA) in the fall of 2016, but she delayed that plan as she and Matt focused on their marriage preparation with Father Nagel at St. John.

“We had talked about our values and our future, but we just

found out so much more about each other through marriage prep,” Kayci says. “I found out more about the Catholic faith, too. It’s about having that support system that wants you to have a successful marriage. The Catholic Church wants you to have a great life together and be the best person you can be who helps others.”

The marriage preparation complemented the growth of faith they had experienced as a couple.

“We had been going to church together for a full year leading up to our engagement and marriage,” Matt says. “We had been growing in our faith together.”

Making the commitment—love and faith

The growth of their faith together played a major role when Kayci and Matt considered where they wanted to be married.

At first, they talked about getting married in Kayci’s hometown in Illinois. Yet the more they thought about it, Indianapolis became the best choice for



Matt and Kayci Mikrut are all smiles moments after he proposed to her on a golf course near her hometown in Illinois on Labor Day weekend of 2016. Kayci flashes the ring while Matt holds the sign that he used to ask her to marry him. (Submitted photo)

them, and so was having the wedding in the Catholic Church, at St. John’s.

“We said our vows in a stunning church, in the presence of God, in the city where we met and fell in love,” Kayci says. “Our relationship blossomed as we began attending church at St. John’s together, and there was never any question that St. John’s was the place for us to begin our life together.”

Both smile as they recall their wedding day on Oct. 21, 2017.

“My favorite part of the day was seeing the joy on the faces of everyone who shared in our special day—from our parents to our siblings and friends. But above all, it was seeing the joy on my wife’s face,” Matt says.

In the months following the wedding, Kayci and Matt turned their focus to her becoming a Catholic through the RCIA program. Matt served as Kayci’s sponsor.

Kayci was received into the full communion of the Church during the Easter Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday earlier this year. The depth of what the Church could add to her life flowed through her that night.

“On our wedding day, we had the support of our family and friends,” she says. “On that night, we also had a lot of support from strangers.”

That sense of belonging and sharing is what young adults are seeking in their lives, the couple says.

“We both moved here from different cities,” Kayci says. “We were looking to build a community. I have my gym, my flag football. The Church offers us another community. We’ve met some great people through RCIA. It’s not easy to meet friends in a new place at this age. It’s also advantageous to have a social outlet at Church as well. Our RCIA group has formed into a little family.”

Kayci needed that extra layer of “family” from their RCIA group and

others in the parish when her grandfather died in January.

“Having this level of faith and the support of the community meant so much to me.”

‘A team of three’

Reflecting on all those moments of love and faith, Matt describes the nearly five years since their paths first crossed on a football field as “an incredible journey thus far.”

“It comes as no surprise that as our love has grown, so has our relationship with God,” he says. “I can’t imagine going on this journey with anyone else. The rest of the journey is unknown, which can be intimidating, but knowing that I get to do it with my wife and with the guidance of God is all that matters.”

Kayci marvels at how much their world has changed since they were teammates on that flag football team.

“After being married at St. John’s and going through RCIA together as I became Catholic, God is at the center of our lives,” she says. “Together, we make a team of three. Having that strength in God and in my husband has completely changed my life forever.” †

‘We had talked about our values and our future, but we just found out so much more about each other through marriage prep. I found out more about the Catholic faith, too. It’s about having that support system that wants you to have a successful marriage. The Catholic Church wants you to have a great life together and be the best person you can be who helps others.’

—Kayci Mikrut

‘It comes as no surprise that as our love has grown, so has our relationship with God. I can’t imagine going on this journey with anyone else. The rest of the journey is unknown, which can be intimidating, but knowing that I get to do it with my wife and with the guidance of God is all that matters.’

—Matt Mikrut

Inspiring choice for a wedding ‘can change the world’

By John Shaughnessy

Father Rick Nagel smiles as he talks about weddings, including the dramatic change he’s seen involving marriage ceremonies at one of the most beautiful churches in central and southern Indiana.

For years, non-parishioners filled up the schedule for weddings at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis, lured by the grandeur and beauty of the historic church and its closeness to reception sites in the heart of the city.

“Now, the majority of our weddings are for our own parishioners,” says Father Nagel, the pastor of St. John, a parish that has placed a great emphasis on welcoming young adults and college students in the past decade. “It’s been very consistent over the past five to seven years.”

This year, the St. John staff is helping with 59 weddings, with 35 of them involving parishioners getting married at the parish church, 17 involving non-parishioners, and another seven marriages involving parishioners who are getting married in other churches in their home parishes.

Still, Father Nagel says his true joy about all these weddings is that the young couples are choosing to be married in the Church, which is far from a given in today’s society.

“In the midst of a secular culture that doesn’t raise up marriage and family life as a highest value, it inspires me to know that these couples not only are choosing to get married in the Church but to live Catholic,” he says. “It also gives me a lot of hope in a day when we hear all the statistics of divorce or we hear of people who don’t get married.”

Father Nagel makes a point of always thanking the couples “for getting married sacramentally in the Church.”

“To receive God’s blessing in the Church is very beautiful. As we do the marriage prep with the couples, we’ve learned that the vast majority are choosing this for themselves, and not just because of mom and dad or grandmom. They’re choosing it because they believe it’s paramount for their futures.”

Father Nagel believes the parish’s emphasis on welcoming young adults and college students has contributed to many of these couples meeting each other and then wanting to get married in the Church.

“I’m not typically a matchmaker,” Father Nagel says, breaking into another smile. “But I do feel we’re very blessed to offer a fertile ground for young adults to make friendships and get to know each other. I can’t tell you the number of couples who met at a social here.”

Forming a foundation of faith

Yet the main focus is on helping people develop a deeper relationship with God, he says. And that emphasis continues for engaged couples as the parish provides—and insists upon—a strong marriage preparation program for them.

“We require the ‘One in Christ’ retreat,” he says. “It’s over two weekends, and it’s very thorough with the theology of marriage, the covenant and some ‘Theology of the Body.’ During the retreat, the couple is always breaking off with questions that are being presented. So they have some time to talk. And during the week in-between, there’s some homework to do together.”

The second weekend of the retreat, which occurs on Saturday only, includes a focus on an aspect of the Catholic faith that most engaged couples haven’t considered: natural family planning.

“What we find is that it isn’t on the radar for the vast majority of couples,” Father Nagel says. “When they learn about it, they think it’s great. Requiring the classes provides the knowledge, and then they can make the choice.”

There are also meetings with parish staff about planning the liturgy for the wedding.

“We emphasize that the most important thing on that day will be the sacrament,”

Father Nagel says. “They also make choices about readings for the wedding. That’s powerful too because they’re reading a lot, and they’re going through the word.”

A relationship that can change the world

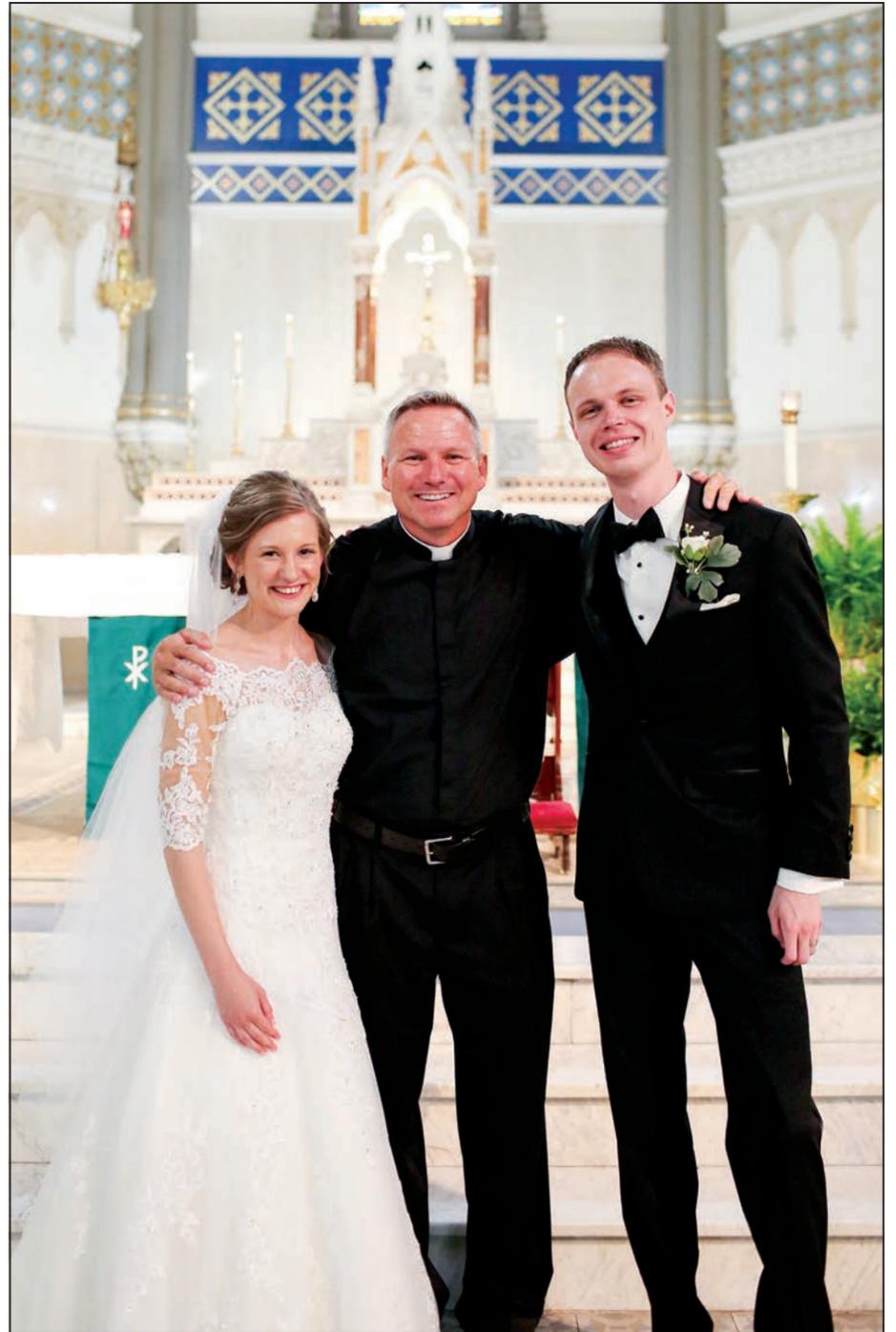
The couple also is given a testing tool that reveals the gifts each person will bring to the marriage, and opportunities for growth.

Then there are meetings with either Father Nagel or Deacon David Bartolowits, who presides at most of the weddings at St. John that don’t involve the Eucharist.

“In our meetings with them, we ask, ‘How did you meet? What do you love about each other? What do you struggle

‘In the midst of a secular culture that doesn’t raise up marriage and family life as a highest value, it inspires me to know that these couples not only are choosing to get married in the Church but to live Catholic. It also gives me a lot of hope in a day when we hear all the statistics of divorce or we hear of people who don’t get married.’

—Father Rick Nagel, pastor of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis



Father Rick Nagel, pastor of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, poses for a photo with Amanda and Craig Schebler after presiding at their wedding at the parish church on July 8, 2017. (Photo courtesy of Soul Creations Photography)

with [about] the Church? What do you love most about the Church?” Father Nagel says. “We also ask them about the last time they’ve been to confession and whether they are cohabitating.”

If there’s a situation where the couple is living outside the teachings of the Church, Father Nagel talks to them about making a commitment to change that reality—in the belief that as long as someone is moving in the direction that God wants them to follow, God will honor that effort.

It all fits within the overall commitment that a married couple makes to each other and to God, Father Nagel notes.

“We know from the grace of the sacrament that couples married

sacramentally in the Church can change the world. It sets them on a firm foundation. When they start on that firm foundation, they’re more likely to continue that for a lifetime.

“One of the missions of marriage is to help each other get to heaven, and to use that as a filter for your life together and for your family. When you do, it changes everything.”

(The semi-annual marriage supplement of The Criterion will run in the July 27 issue, featuring stories on marriage preparation, plus photos and information on couples from the archdiocese who have been married in the Church in the past year—or will soon be married in the Church.) †

Extension’s help to rebuild Texas diocese after Harvey like a ‘rainbow’

PORT ARTHUR, Texas (CNS)—After Hurricane Harvey last year, “there was no rainbow,” Bishop Curtis J. Guillory of Beaumont said about the massive destruction wrought by the storm.

But with its commitment of nearly \$670,000 to help the diocese rebuild, “Catholic Extension is that rainbow and the promise that things will get better,” the bishop said. “We are so grateful for their generosity.”

Father Jack Wall, president of Catholic Extension, presented a check for \$100,000 to the Diocese of Beaumont during a special Mass on July 10 at St. Joseph Church in Port Arthur. The

check was for the first part of the funds to come from Catholic Extension.

“We are privileged to help,” Father Wall said. “We have supported Texas for more than 100 years, and in this time of crisis, especially, we want you to know that you are not alone. The Church is bigger than any challenges you face.”

Based in Chicago, Catholic Extension raises and distributes funds to support U.S. mission dioceses, many of which are rural, cover a large geographic area, and have limited personnel and pastoral resources.

Hurricane Harvey’s blow to Texas was swift, but recovering from it will take years. The magnitude of last year’s disaster was massive—destroying homes, businesses, roadways and churches. Most of its damage was caused by flooding.

In the Diocese of Beaumont, which is in southeast Texas, church buildings

took in 8 feet of water. In some areas, including Port Arthur, 90 percent of the land was flooded.

Residents are struggling with the financial tolls of losing their belongings and their livelihoods. Parishes have reported ruined buildings as well as decreased revenue from their weekly collections, because parishioners are in dire straits.

Catholic Extension will fund four projects in the Beaumont Diocese:

—Restoration of education buildings at St. Joseph Parish in Port Arthur.

—Restoration of the director’s residence at Holy Family Retreat Center in Beaumont.

—Restoration of Christopher Education building at St. Mary Parish in Fannett.

—The ministry of religious women in the diocese’s western vicariate. They serve three parishes with large Hispanic

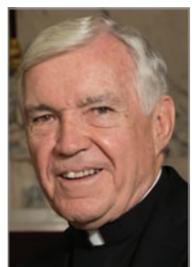
populations, who were ravaged by the hurricane.

Flood insurance for the buildings that will be restored is either insufficient or nonexistent and renovation costs are extensive, said Catholic Extension.

It also described the sisters’ ministry as “critical,” because “they are bilingual and a bridge to the Hispanics, mainly immigrants, who live in poverty, but are very dedicated to the Church.”

“They have been living in prolonged misery, since the hurricane struck, but the sisters serve them daily with pastoral care, home visits and religious education,” Catholic Extension said.

Some of the funds were raised at an event hosted by Catholic Extension last February in honor of retired Archbishop Joseph A. Fiorenza of Galveston-Houston. A native son of Beaumont, he asked that the event’s proceeds benefit rebuilding efforts in the diocese where he grew up. †



Fr. Jack Wall

CAUCUS

continued from page 1

The priests returned to their parishes resolved to “have the Church do something about” racism, he said.

Mercy Sister Martin de Porres Grey was the only woman religious to attend. She has since left religious life. The organization’s history records that she was so inspired by the gathering that she organized a similar meeting of black religious sisters in August later that year in Pittsburgh. About 150 women attended, marking the founding of the National Black Sisters’ Conference.

The sisters, too, wanted to support each other and address racism within the institutional Church as well as in their own congregations, recalled Sister Josita Colbert, 80, a member of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in Baltimore who attended the gathering. Today, she serves as the congregation’s vocation director.

Sister Josita said she came away inspired from the first meeting and continues to attend the annual gathering, which includes the priests’ caucus, the National Black Catholic Seminarians Association and the National Association of Black Catholic Deacons.

“It was amazing and overwhelming at the beginning,” she told Catholic News Service (CNS). “We had speakers who challenged us in terms of what was going on in the world [then] and here in the United States as black people and what we as black religious women were going to do about it.”

The priests’ and sisters’ organizations have had a vibrant history and will celebrate their 1968 founding on July 28-Aug. 2 in New Orleans. The seminarians and deacons will be there, too.

Father Kenneth Taylor, who pastors two parishes in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and is president of the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus, told CNS this year’s gathering will be a time of celebration for all four organizations.

The joint meeting also will be one to reflect on the role of African-Americans within the Church, “especially during a time when we seem to have lost the interest of the Church leaders because of the strong Hispanic immigration into the country,” said Father Taylor, pastor of Holy Angels and St. Rita parishes, both in Indianapolis.

The organizations do not want to create a rift with Hispanic Catholics, but rather want to make sure diocesan bishops do not shrink African-American outreach while expanding Hispanic ministries, he said.

“This gives us an opportunity to come together in mutual support and encouragement,” Father Taylor explained. “It also gives us a chance to come together to talk about the needs of the black community and what we can do to help black Catholics become more engaged in the Church.”

A deep concern for racism underlies the organizations today. Some clergy and women religious were outspoken about the racism they saw in the 1960s. Their strident stances in those early years often alienated diocesan or congregational leadership.

Although the stridency may have been dialed back a bit today, their views have not faded. Black priests and women religious continue to say they want the Church to



Women pose in 1969 outside the National Black Sisters’ Conference headquarters in Washington. The organization’s founding came out of a meeting of black sisters in August 1968 in Pittsburgh organized by Mercy Sister Martin de Porres Grey. She was inspired by the first meeting of the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus held in Detroit earlier that year. (CNS photo/courtesy National Black Catholic Sisters’ Conference)

confront racism so that all the faithful can achieve true equality.

Father David Benz, 75, who was ordained to the priesthood in 1975 in the Archdiocese of New York and now is retired, said at times he feels African-Americans in the Church almost appear “invisible.”

“I belong to the same Church. I know what the social teachings of the Church are, and we as a Church see this and ignore that,” he told CNS.

Father Taylor credited the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) for creating its Ad Hoc Committee Against Racism, which is finalizing a pastoral letter on racism across American society as well as the Church. A vote on the document is planned for the bishops’ general assembly in November.

Still, black women religious and priests expressed concern that African-American evangelization is being overlooked again within the Church. They voiced concern that diocesan reorganizations and parish and school closings have disproportionately affected African-American communities.

“It leaves the impression that the Catholic Church is pulling out of the black community,” Father Taylor said.

Just as worrisome is the rise in white supremacy, overt racist comments in the media and in politics, and emerging policies that harm minority communities. The priests and women religious said they believe the Church must become more vocal in offering the moral guidance necessary to change people’s hearts.

Sister Roberta Fulton, a member of the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur and president of the National Black Sisters’ Conference, credited congregations of women religious for addressing racism within their structures. She and others called for stronger efforts to promote religious vocations among African Americans as key to addressing their concerns.

“People are not entering religious life like they used to, so we’re looking at other ways for your people to understand the call,” Sister Roberta said. One option is to encourage young people to become associates of a congregation. “Those associates, some have become sisters. They learn some things about the sisters and what we do, where we minister.”

Precious Blood Father Clarence Williams, senior parochial vicar at St. Joan of Arc Parish in Chagrin Falls, Ohio, in the Cleveland Diocese, was among the organizers of the black seminarians’ organization soon after the priests’ caucus formed. He said that the early annual joint gatherings of the associations helped encourage participants to recommit to their ministry.

“Meeting yearly with the religious women and priests and really reflecting on our reality in our communities, within our diocese, within assignment, we found our wisdom in that community to stay [in ministry],” Father Williams said. “Those without the support didn’t make it. It became discouraging. It became too hostile,” he said.

For women religious, the annual gathering was just as inspiring.

“The black sisters conference was wonderful because it brought us all together,” recalled Sister Juanita Shealey, a member of the Congregation of St. Joseph in Cleveland. “We sang, we danced, we prayed, we talked about how wonderful it was to see other black sisters.”

Members of both organizations also lamented the overall declining number of vocations to the priesthood and religious life, especially among African-Americans. With fewer vocations, it also means fewer opportunities for African-Americans to assume leadership positions in the Church.

“Over the years, we have made recommendations to get priests named [bishops]. ... But it seems as if the Church is much more concerned about the Hispanic community than they are about the black community,” Father Benz said.

Having more African-Americans in leadership, especially as bishops, would help with evangelization, Father Benz added.

The New Orleans gathering will give participants a chance to reflect on such questions. Attendees also will honor past and present leaders, those whom Father Taylor called “exemplars.”

He said rather than honor one person with an award, 50 exemplars have been identified and will be identified at the gathering.

The honor will serve to show not just where the organizations have been, Father Taylor said, but hopefully will inspire members to carry on their legacy to achieve full acceptance in the Church and society. †



Mercy Sister Martin de Porres Grey, pictured in an undated photo, was the only woman religious among dozens of black priests who gathered in Detroit in 1968 for the first meeting of the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus. She was so inspired by the gathering that she organized a similar meeting of black sisters in August later that year in Pittsburgh, marking the founding of the National Black Sisters’ Conference. (CNS photo/Global Sisters)



Josephite Father William Norvel and dozens of black priests met in Detroit in 1968 for the first meeting of the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus. Father William, pictured in an undated photo, is now 82 and retired in Atlanta. (CNS files)



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Men who got settlements after alleged abuse share their stories

NEW YORK (CNS)—A front-page *New York Times* article published on July 16 detailed the alleged abuse of two seminarians in the Diocese of Metuchen, N.J., by then-Bishop Theodore E. McCarrick in the 1980s that resulted in settlements to each man.

For one of the seminarians, the alleged abuse continued after he had been ordained to the priesthood.

The 3,100-word article, written by Laurie Goodstein and Sharon Otterman, said the bishop would invite seminarians to spend time with him on overnight trips away from their seminary, and then, in giving bedroom assignments, direct one of them to his bedroom, where there was just one bed.

The abuse of these two men, according to an interview with one of the former priests by the *Times* and the examination of the second man's file by the newspaper on the condition that he—now also a former priest—not be named, took place in the 1980s, while Bishop McCarrick served as first bishop of Metuchen and then as archbishop of Newark, N.J.

Ordained a priest for the New York Archdiocese in 1958, then-Father McCarrick was ordained an auxiliary bishop of New York in 1977. He was appointed the first bishop of Metuchen in 1981 and was named archbishop of Newark in 1986. He was installed as archbishop of Washington in 2001 and made a cardinal in that same year. He retired in 2006.

In a statement to *The New York Times*, Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin of Newark said that he was “greatly disturbed by reports” that Cardinal McCarrick, his predecessor in Newark from 1986 to 2000, had “harassed seminarians and young clergy.”

“I recognize without any ambiguity that all people have a right to live, work and study in safe environments,” he wrote. “I intend to discuss this tragedy with the leadership of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in order to articulate standards that will assure high standards of respect by bishops, priests and deacons for all adults.”

Cardinal McCarrick, now 88, said in a June 20 statement that he would no longer exercise any public ministry “in obedience” to the Vatican after an allegation he abused a teenager in 1971,

when he was serving as a priest of the Archdiocese of New York, was found “credible and substantiated.”

The cardinal said he was shocked and saddened by the report, but said he had no recollection of that episode of abuse. He declined to be interviewed by the *Times* for the news story.

The Washington Archdiocese said in a statement on the matter that “the Holy See ... has exclusive authority in the oversight of a cardinal,” and referred the matter to the New York Archdiocese.

New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan, also in a June 20 statement, said the allegation was turned over to law enforcement officials, and was then thoroughly investigated by an independent forensic agency, as per the “Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People” first approved by the U.S. bishops in 2002. “The Holy See was alerted as well, and encouraged us to continue the process,” he added.

The Archdiocese of New York “renews its apology to all victims abused by priests,” he added.

In the July 16 *Times* story, Robert Ciolek, 57, cited about a dozen trips out of town with then-Bishop McCarrick, including a beach house purchased by the diocese in Sea Girt, N.J., a fishing camp in Eldred, N.Y., a small apartment on an upper floor of a hospital the prelate used for overnight stays in New York City, and one trip to Puerto Rico.

Ciolek told the paper he felt unable to say no, in part because he had been sexually abused by a teacher in his Catholic high school—information he had shared with Bishop McCarrick. “I trusted him, I confided in him, I admired him,” he added. “I couldn’t imagine that he would have anything other than my best interests in mind.”

The touching started with the bishop asking Ciolek to rub his shoulders, and then led to other, unwanted touching. But Ciolek said that touching always stayed above the waist and avoided the genitals. He added there was no kissing or holding of hands.

Ciolek left the priesthood in 1988 to marry. Around 1999, he was called in by Msgr. Michael J. Alliegro, who had been then-Bishop McCarrick’s secretary in Metuchen. The monsignor, according



‘I recognize without any ambiguity that all people have a right to live, work and study in safe environments. I intend to discuss this tragedy with the leadership of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in order to articulate standards that will assure high standards of respect by bishops, priests and deacons for all adults.’

— Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin

to the *Times*, knew about the trips with seminarians and the bed-sharing. He asked Ciolek if he planned to sue the diocese. “And I literally laughed, and I said, ‘no.’” Mr. Ciolek told the newspaper, adding Msgr. Alliegro responded with a sigh of relief.

By then, though, allegations about the prelate, now an archbishop, had been circulating for five years, according to the *Times*. The paper said complaints were made to American bishops, the papal nuncio in Washington and, in 2008, to Pope Benedict XVI. Cardinal McCarrick had voted in the conclave that elected him three years prior.

The first complaint was written in 1994 by the second priest who received an abuse settlement.

In 1987, according to the file examined by the *Times*, the second former priest said the prelate—by this time archbishop of Newark—took him to an Italian restaurant in New York City, and then to the small apartment above the hospital.

The *Times* said the archbishop asked the seminarian to change into a striped sailor shirt and a pair of shorts he had on hand, and joined him in the bed. “He put his arms around me and wrapped his legs between mine,” said the account written by the ex-priest, who was still a seminarian at that time.

“He also wrote that he once saw Archbishop McCarrick having sex with a young priest in a cabin at the Eldred fishing camp, and that the archbishop invited him to be ‘next,’” the *Times* said. The seminarian also received letters from the archbishop

signed “Uncle Ted” or “Uncle T.”

In his 1994 letter to Cardinal McCarrick’s successor in Metuchen, Bishop Edward T. Hughes, the second priest said he believed the sexual and emotional abuse he endured from Cardinal McCarrick, as well as several other priests, “had left him so traumatized that it triggered him to touch two 15-year-old boys inappropriately,” the newspaper reported.

Ten years later, that priest had been forced to resign under the U.S. Church’s new zero-tolerance policy against child abuse, based on the admission in that letter.

He received a \$100,000 settlement in 2006 from the Diocese of Metuchen. Ciolek received an \$80,000 settlement in 2004 paid by the Archdiocese of Newark and the Dioceses of Metuchen and Trenton, according to the *Times*.

In June in response to the credible allegation of abuse of a minor in 1971 made against Cardinal McCarrick, the current bishop of Metuchen, Bishop James F. Checchio, said he had his diocese’s records examined and found no similar report that the prelate had “ever abused any minor during his time here in Metuchen.”

“The abuse of a minor by a priest—is as is being reported in this case from New York—is an abomination and sickens and saddens us all,” he said.

He acknowledged that allegations that Cardinal McCarrick engaged in sexual behavior with adults decades ago had led to settlements in two of those allegations. “The abuse of anyone who is vulnerable is both shameful and horrific,” Bishop Checchio said. †

Jesuit priest aims to stem decline of faith with launch of catechetical website

ANAHEIM, Calif. (CNS)—Jesuit Father Robert Spitzer, former president of Gonzaga University, launched a cutting-edge catechetical website to confront the rising tide of unbelief spurred by an increasingly



Fr. Robert Spitzer, S.J.

skeptical, science-saturated society.

Developed through Father Spitzer’s Magis Center, based in Garden Grove, Credible Catholic offers 20 downloadable “modules” that equip Magis Center learners with evidence-based arguments for core

Christian beliefs. The catechetical website is www.CredibleCatholic.com.

“The Credible Catholic modules correspond to fundamental apologetics in light of modern scientific methods,” said Father Spitzer, author and co-host of the Eternal Word Television Network program, “Father Spitzer’s Universe.”

“For example, I approach the Resurrection through evidence, but I respond to every Scripture passage, too,” he said in an interview with Catholic News Service (CNS).

Each module is available in animated PowerPoint or document format in three levels of complexity, from highly detailed to a “Cliff Notes” version, with a separate teaching.

Interactive resources on the website include a robust search engine for navigation to key words or phrases, and a “contact us” click-through to enable direct contact with Credible Catholic staff.

The modules, downloadable files and all supporting resources, including Magis Center staff support, are free.

Based on Father Spitzer’s books and other work in apologetics, modules include contributions from astrophysicists, historians, theologians, physicists, and other experts. Each module aligns with specific sections of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, so it can easily be used to supplement sacrament preparation or for individual study.

Father Spitzer’s foray into a multidisciplinary catechetical website sprung from his growing concern that religious affiliation is declining, due in large part, he believes, to the influence, particularly on youth, of “secular myths that misstate and/or misrepresent the facts.”

These myths include “science has proven God does not exist,” “humans are just a bunch of conglomerated atoms and molecules,” “suffering proves God does not exist,” and Jesus was “a very special person, but he certainly was not divine.”

Older Catholics can find these arguments challenging, but particularly vulnerable, Father Spitzer said, are many young people whose faith is tremendously shaken or dissipates when confronted with the stresses of academic and peer pressures.

The Credible Catholic’s “7 Essential Modules,” the first modules developed by Father Spitzer, give students and catechists tools to meet the challenges of skeptics. They cover core Christian beliefs and offer science-based evidence to support them.

“Kids demand proof,” said the priest.

“The more validated it is, the more they like it. ‘7 Essential Modules’ is the inoculation that we give to students so they can go through their college years without getting their faith knocked out from under them.”

A discussion of terminal lucidity, for example, is included in the module regarding proof of the soul. In another, research in Near Death Experiences, or NDEs, helps illuminate the reality of life after death. And an explanation of the physical properties of light and heat transference is used to explain how the image on the Shroud of Turin could not have been humanly possible at the time it was made.

Anne Steinemann, professor of civil and environmental engineering at the University of Melbourne, Australia, an early supporter of Credible Catholic, has seen the positive impact Credible Catholic has on students.

“Science can explain ‘what,’” Steinemann told CNS, “but it cannot answer the question, ‘Why?’ Credible Catholic is effective, easy and exciting. It answers, head on, the typical objections to the Catholic faith.”

The modules’ format also helps facilitate learning.

“Students,” said Steinemann, “can view the presentations on their own time, on their own device, in their own way. In the age of information overload, and trying to get students’ attention, this does.”

Michael O’Hara, executive director for Credible Catholic, works with teachers, clergy and staff of dioceses and parishes to understand how the unique material can work with existing ministries, departments

or catechetical classes.

“Most parishes are ‘programmed out,’ but this isn’t a program,” said O’Hara. “A school in Texas might use Module 2 in their science class. Another parish did the modules for homework, a summer study or journaled on it.”

Parents benefit from the modules’ content, too.

“The problem for the parent,” said O’Hara, “is that their kids are growing up in a world unlike anything that they grew up in. They don’t have a counter to the arguments. The modules help the parent cope, and help them feel confident to counter the arguments.”

In November 2017, Father Spitzer and his team from Magis Center debuted “7 Essential Modules” at an event attended by U.S. Cardinal William J. Levada, retired head of the Vatican’s doctrinal congregation, and 34 other U.S. Catholic bishops.

In June of this year, the priest presented the modules to 75 archbishops and bishops during the spring assembly of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Florida. He now has 80 dioceses lined up to use the modules in their religious education or sacrament preparation programs, or as independent study add-ons.

Father Spitzer also plans to continue adding modules, eventually covering all of the catechism.

(The Credible Catholic modules and a link to sign up for updates or staff support can be found at www.crediblecatholic.com. The website for Father Spitzer’s Magis Center is www.magiscenter.com.) †

Amid the Fray/Greg Erlandson

Returning to one brief shining moment thanks to *Camelot*

Washington, D.C., has been confounded this summer. Not by the fact that Sarah Huckabee Sanders can't eat out undisturbed, or that the former cardinal archbishop of the town has been accused of being a predator, or that the president has fired off another intemperate tweet.

Washington has been undone by the success of *Camelot*, a 58-year-old musical

about King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table.

Put on by the Shakespeare Theatre Company (yes, they know it was written by Lerner and Loewe, not the Stratford bard), it has set sales records, and its run has been extended.

The Washington Post, after fulsomely praising the production, noted the wistfulness of the audience as they watched this tale of idealism, love and heartbreak.

Historically, its debut coincided with, and became the soundtrack for, the mythology of the Kennedy administration, which was in power when it first appeared. Jackie Kennedy made this connection explicit in an interview given days after her husband's assassination, when she quoted his favorite lines from the end of the show:

"Don't let it be forgot, that once there was a spot, for one brief shining moment, that was known as Camelot."

She meant it as an elegy for her husband's administration, but the audience in 2018 is thinking of a lot more than JFK. The story of King Arthur and his quest to build a more perfect kingdom upon the principles of chivalry and justice as an alternative to brute force might have seemed quaint and naive a few decades ago, but it is clearly striking a chord now.

The director, Alan Paul, makes it clear that the election of 2016 helped him to see the play with fresh eyes. "As we grapple with how our country has changed, as the framework of what's acceptable continues to shift, the idea of *Camelot*—that enlightened leadership, kindness and respect for each other is not something to be taken for granted, in fact is something to fight for—feels more and more urgent," he wrote.

The audience was clearly aware of this context. When the bastard son of Arthur, Mordred, speaks his lines of cynicism and coarseness, urging Camelot's knights to throw off their ideals of goodness and ultimately bringing down the idealistic kingdom, the allusions were obvious.

Indeed, when the actor playing Mordred took his final bow, I heard boos from some audience members. It had nothing to do with his performance, but

it had everything to do with his character. Instead of the actors breaking the fourth wall, the audience did.

Of course, one person's Arthur is another person's Mordred, and vice versa. Whatever one's politics, however, I suspect almost all of us are wishing that we could more easily believe in, much less return to, an age when there were such ideals.

Can we really be happy in a time when restaurants are ejecting people they disagree with and White House officials mock dying senators? When political parties weigh every calculation by what it gains them? When the most helpless—the unborn, immigrant children, the poor and the powerless—are the most defenseless? Where is their Arthur to defend them?

Lerner and Loewe meant their play to be a tribute to the American dream. Yet the musical is in many ways a tragedy. Queen Guinevere betrays her husband for handsome Lancelot, a man whose purity gives way to adultery. The play ends at the dawn of a battle between the once close friends, and the ideal of Camelot is already fading.

A dark ending for a play ostensibly celebrating American optimism and confidence. What did Lerner and Loewe see in our future? More importantly, how do we reclaim that dream?

(Greg Erlandson, director and editor-in-chief of Catholic News Service, can be reached at gerlandson@catholicnews.com.) †



For The Journey/Effie Calderola

Execution and mercy

In early July, the Nebraska Supreme Court issued an Aug. 14 execution date for Carey Dean Moore.



Moore, 60, has been sitting on death row for nearly four decades. It was 1979 when he killed two Omaha cabdrivers five days apart, and in 1980 he was sentenced to death for these crimes.

I've met Carey, and I've corresponded with him recently. So it was with no small sense of irony that I noted that on the day after his death warrant was set, on July 6, we observed the feast of St. Maria Goretti.

When I was a child, the nuns who taught me held up Maria Goretti as an example, reaffirming that she, at only 11 years old, died to maintain her purity.

If this young Italian girl could die to preserve her virginity, it was strongly suggested, we girls could certainly develop a healthy respect for our own.

In this era of #MeToo, Maria Goretti does stand out as an apt example of a female victim of brutal assault and attempted rape. Stabbed 14 times, she died a horrendously painful death. Throughout her ordeal, she remained courageous and prayerful.

But it was only when I was older that I realized the standout theme of Maria's martyrdom was not sex. It was mercy.

Goretti and her murderer were both members of a poverty-stricken, illiterate Italian underclass. When her father died, Maria's mother assumed his role in the fields alongside the other children as they eked out a subsistence income.

Maria kept the house running. So, her attacker, Alessandro Serenelli, almost 20, knew she was alone and had previously made advances before the day that her resistance resulted in her cruel death.

On her deathbed, she forgave Serenelli. He was sentenced to 30 years in prison, where he was a vicious prisoner until the night Maria Goretti came to him in a dream. From that moment on, he became a changed man, a man who accepted the forgiveness that was offered him by Goretti and, most importantly, by God.

Upon his early release from prison, he begged forgiveness from Goretti's mother, who granted it. Serenelli attended Goretti's canonization in 1950 and led a life of devotion and prayer.

And Carey? The Nebraska Legislature abolished the death penalty in 2015. I worked on that cause, and I saw the large files of information given to each legislator. It was a well-debated, thoughtful discussion and the facts won out.

Unfortunately, with the financial assistance of our wealthy governor, a petition to repeal the abolition put the issue before voters. Nebraskans voted overwhelmingly to reinstate the death penalty.

If each thoughtful Nebraska voter could have personally read those files we presented the legislators, the vote would have been different. But education was a gargantuan effort.

So, Carey and 11 others face possible execution, depending on a few outstanding court challenges. For his part, Carey is not contesting the execution.

To live in the on-again, off-again environment of state-sponsored death wears one down. He sent me a brochure that detailed his own spiritual journey, recognizing the terrible wrongs he did and the way his "heart has been torn in so many pieces" and yet acknowledging the mercy of God.

I am grateful that the authorities did not execute Alessandro Serenelli. It gave God—and Maria Goretti—a chance to turn his heart toward love. May St. Maria Goretti pray for Carey, and for our nation, one of the last "civilized" countries that kills its own.

(Effie Calderola writes for Catholic News Service.) †

Worship and Evangelization Outreach/Gabriela Ross

Make time for some saintly inspiration during your summer

Summer is a great time to rejuvenate. Maybe it's going on vacation,

gathering the family for a barbecue by the pool, or just sitting with a friend over an iced tea and slowing down long enough to share how life is going. This is also true in our spiritual life.

In the archdiocesan Office of Catechesis, summertime is greatly devoted to growing professionally and spiritually. Sure, there are projects that keep moving forward and questions that need replies.

But in a special way, the focus is on learning something new and nurturing the faith that God has given us.

After a busy year of ministry, this is not a luxury; it's essential. As the saying goes, "You can't give what you don't have."

Jesus often drew away to a deserted place to pray. So if rest and prayer were God's invention, we should follow his lead!

Knowing that we are body and spirit, it's important to care for our physical

needs as we strive to nurture the spiritual. Making it a point to catch up on sleep, getting enough exercise and eating healthy food can go a long way to feeling re-energized for the mission that God has called us to.

Taking care of our mental health is just as important. Along with bodily and mental health, nurturing a contemplative spirit and renewing our sacramental life can be very beneficial during this time of restoration.

Sometimes we may fall into the routine of rushing through prayer—only to realize that it has been ages since we really shared our heart with God.

Maybe that means we make it a point to visit the sacraments, make a retreat for a weekend, start meeting with a spiritual director, or dive into the Catholic Church's wealth of contemplative prayer practices. Whatever you're able to do, take time to reconnect with God this summer.

No matter where we are in our walk with God, there is always room to grow. Age has nothing to do with our zeal for Christ.

I recently came across a list of about a dozen saints who lived heroic lives of virtue and died before the age of 30. It's never too

early—and we're never too late—to choose to be a disciple of Jesus Christ through his holy Catholic Church.

Thankfully, the Church in her wisdom provides us with role models of holiness through the saints to inspire us in our call to become saints. Some of these saints have written spiritual advice that is still available for us today.

Did you know that St. John Paul II was inspired by the writings of St. Louis de Monfort on true devotion to Mary? And St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross was changed when she read the life of St. Teresa of Avila? Saints beget saints!

As we take time this summer to be renewed in mind, body and spirit, let us take advantage of the Church's many blessings—sacraments, prayer practices and saints—so we may more effectively share the faith with those we serve. If you'd like to know more about saints who inspired saints, there is a free e-book from Catholic author Brandon Vogt available at saintsfavoritebooks.com.

(Gabriela Ross is coordinator of catechetical resources within the archdiocesan Secretariat for Worship and Evangelization. She can be reached at gross@archindy.org.) †



The Human Side/Fr. Eugene Hemrick

Prudence dictates need to understand laws of bonding, civil law

Whenever I see a mother rubbing her infant's back, it reminds me of studies on parenting. From them, we learn stroking a baby's back generates healthy physical growth.

The intimacy it creates is vital to psychological fitness because it imprints on a child the significance of caring, tenderness, affection, confidence and closeness. Gently stroking a child is vital to bonding.

On many occasions, mothers have handed their child to me to hold. Often, the young child will instinctively reach back to the mother to be with her.

A mother recently told me when her daughter comes home from work,

she loves having her mom stroke her back. Not only do babies love and need intimacy, so too do adults instinctively yearn for its bonding spirit.

It is said that wounded soldiers on the battlefield are often heard crying for their mothers.

These thoughts lead us to a sacred truth of life: the laws of bonding, intimacy and caring top the list of first truths.

In the past few weeks, some have contended that law is law in the debate over immigrant children being separated from their parents. It is true that a small minority of immigrants coming into the country are drug peddlers, criminals and problematic. It is also true that past border wars have heightened hostilities on the issue of immigration.

Responding to today's immigration challenge requires postmodern wisdom like never before.

Maintaining the laws of intimacy, caring and bonding between parents and children is the very soul of our nation and family life. The strength of progress depends on the psychological, physical and spiritual bonding of family life.

When it's argued that the law is the law, what laws are being addressed? Are the laws needed to sustain family life and healthy childhood considered? Are they considered the basis for keeping the order and stability of a nation?

Do pro-life advocates consider preserving these laws as their mission? The same holds true for millions of women who marched for women's rights.

Prudence dictates we get our understanding of law and vital issues in better order.

(Father Eugene Hemrick writes for Catholic News Service.) †



Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, July 22, 2018

- Jeremiah 23:1-6
- Ephesians 2:13-18
- Mark 6:30-34

The Book of Jeremiah is the source of the first reading for Mass on this weekend. One of the four major prophets of ancient



Israel, Jeremiah so firmly saw himself as God's representative that he wrote as if God were writing through him. So, in Jeremiah's works, God often speaks in the first person.

Such is the case in this reading. The

reading reveals the disorder and turmoil that existed in Israel at the time. The split was not only political. It also was religious, because people who held to different interpretations of the Law of Moses opposed each other.

Assuming the role of prophets, persons on their own pressed for one viewpoint or another.

In the writing of Jeremiah, God warned the people against these varying approaches to religion. God's warning was severe. These persons, imposters in prophecy, led people astray. Caring for the people and their well-being, God predicted doom for those who would confuse others in matters of faith.

The people were not helpless victims of these frauds. God promised to send—and did send—legitimate prophets.

Two lessons are clear: Objective truth, given by God, exists. God's truth is not simply the conclusion reached by humans as to what seems reasonable to them. As an aside, individual, subjective interpretation of divine revelation has always been foreign to the Scriptures.

The other truth is that people do not have to struggle to find the truth rooted in God. He has sent representatives to speak the truth.

For the next reading, the Church presents a passage from St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. This reading recalls that the privilege of the Jews was to know God, whereas other nationalities long were in the dark.

Now, with and through Christ, all peoples can know God. The Holy Spirit comes to all who hear Jesus and who love

God, irrespective of race, circumstance or background.

St. Mark's Gospel furnishes the last reading. It is strong in its explanation of the role and identity of the Apostles.

In the story, the Apostles have come back to Jesus, having been sent on mission to teach what the Lord had taught them. Clearly, many people were assembling around Jesus at this time.

Quite pointedly, Jesus took the Apostles aside, away from the crowd, leading the Twelve to a quiet, private place.

Jesus often took the Apostles to be alone with them, because they were the special students, especially commissioned for particular undertakings, given insights into the Lord's teachings that were not provided to the rank and file.

Reflection

The Church in these readings directly and frankly introduces itself and sets forth its credentials. In so doing, it stresses a fact of belief firmly presented since the days of the Old Testament.

God's truth is exact. It is neither fluid nor open to compromise and qualification. It simply is as it is. All else is fraud and unreal. The prophets stressed this fact in the Old Testament. Those persons who usurped the prophets' places were guilty of great fault and brought upon themselves God's rebuke, for they misled the people whom God loved and intended to be holy.

The same theme is evident in this weekend's New Testament readings. St. Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians assures us that the salvation achieved for us by Jesus does not depend upon anyone's earthly advantage. It is offered to all. Importantly, all of us need it.

Mercifully, God offers us knowledge of truth. He sends us Christ. In turn, here on Earth, Jesus appointed as our guides the Apostles, whose teachings the Church so carefully keeps and reveres.

Just as the Old Testament belittled individual interpretation of revelation and emphasized the prophets, so the New Testament discounts any personal definition of truth by emphasizing the place of the Apostles. †

Daily Readings

Monday, July 23

St. Bridget, religious
Micah 6:1-4, 6-8
Psalm 50:5-6, 8-9, 16-17, 21, 23
Matthew 12:38-42

Tuesday, July 24

St. Sharbel Makhluf, priest
Micah 7:14-15, 18-20
Psalm 85:2-8
Matthew 12:46-50

Wednesday, July 25

St. James, Apostle
2 Corinthians 4:7-15
Psalm 126:1-6
Matthew 20:20-28

Thursday, July 26

SS. Joachim and Anne, parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Jeremiah 2:1-3, 7-8, 12-13
Psalm 36:6-11
Matthew 13:10-17

Friday, July 27

Jeremiah 3:14-17
(Response) Jeremiah 31:10-13
Matthew 13:18-23

Saturday, July 28

Jeremiah 7:1-11
Psalm 84:3-6, 8, 11
Matthew 13:24-30

Sunday, July 29

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
2 Kings 4:42-44
Psalm 145:10-11, 15-16, 17-18
Ephesians 4:1-6
John 6:1-15

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

Pray and trust in God's mercy regarding the souls of the faithful departed

My daughter, who was 50 years of age, became deathly ill, spent six weeks in an intensive care unit, then



entered hospice to die. When death was imminent, a nurse finally found a priest to administer last rites. (It was a Jewish hospice, and they weren't used to calling a priest.)

By that time, my daughter was in a coma. She hadn't been to church or to confession in I don't know how long—although she was baptized, received first Communion, etc.

As soon as the priest gave her the sacrament, she passed away. (I was holding her hand.) My question is this: Since she had not been to confession and may have committed a mortal sin (she may have had an abortion, although I am not sure), did she go to purgatory instead of hell?

She was extremely generous in helping the needy and was loved by everyone. I am just so worried. I say the rosary for her every day—twice a day when I can—and I offer St. Gertrude's prayer for the souls in purgatory. (City of origin withheld)

I would not presume to know for certain the ultimate fate of your daughter, but I am inclined to trust in the mercy of a loving God.

In the 25th chapter of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus indicates the final standard on which each of us will be judged—and the key question is, "Did you help people when they needed it?" ("I was hungry and you gave me food ... ill and you cared for me," Mt 25:35-36). From what you said, it would seem that your daughter scores high on this scale of compassion.

If, in fact, she did have an abortion, it could be that she regretted it later and repented of it. She may have then been absolved of it in the sacrament of penance without your knowing about it.

Your reference to the "last rites" reminds me to mention that this sacrament is actually called the "anointing of the sick"—highlighting the fact that it is not reserved for the moment of death, but should be received when anyone is seriously ill. That way, the person is more likely to be able to confess his or her sins, receive absolution and be assured of the mercy of the Lord.

I, too, will pray for your daughter, that you will one day be with her again in the glory of God's presence. Finally, I would invite you to put your heart at ease as much as you can with the help of God regarding your daughter. While continuing to pray for her and all the faithful departed, also ask God to increase your trust in his mercy upon them.

I attended Mass on the most recent holy day of obligation and noticed that only about one-sixth of our parish was in attendance. Is it a mortal sin for those who did not attend? If so, must they go to confession before receiving holy Communion? (New York)

The simplest answers are "yes" and "yes," but they require some explanation. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says, "The faithful are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on days of obligation, unless excused for a serious reason [for example, illness, the care of infants]. ... Those who deliberately fail in this obligation commit a grave sin" (#2181).

Realize, though, that gravity of matter is only one of three requirements for a mortal sin—the others being full knowledge that the act or omission is seriously sinful, and complete consent of the will.

From the frequency in which I receive this question, I would guess that a fair number of Catholics are unaware that Mass attendance on holy days is a grave requirement—an excuse that disappears now that you have read this column!

The catechism mentions illness and the care of infants to justify missing Mass, but there are other legitimate reasons as well, such as unavoidable work obligations. Particularly when a holy day occurs on a weekday, that could well be the case—a reminder to parishes that evening Masses are a big help.

So if a Catholic misses Mass on a holy day through his own fault—and knew that it was a serious obligation—yes, of course, he or she should go to confession before receiving the Eucharist. It bears mentioning that sharing in the Eucharist was the one specific way Jesus asked the Apostles to keep his memory alive.

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.) †

My Journey to God

Jesus Joins ICE

By Norbert Krapf

I read the news today oh boy!
They said Jesus joined ICE,
Immigration and Customs Enforcers.

This is what we need to make
the Gospel speak loud and clear,
Jesus said, with fire in his eyes

and Ice in his heart! Tear the little
ones apart from their mamas.
Put them in cages and cubicles.

Let them not know where they
are going or where their mamas
and maybe daddies have gone

and whether they will ever be together
again. Let them convulse and weep!
Let them learn what Zero Tolerance

means in the middle of the night
and under the fire of a hot sun.
Do not give into sticky compassion.

Be strong and carry a big stick.
Talk tough. Be hard. Erect a wall
between mamas and wailing babies.



(Norbert Krapf is a member of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish in Indianapolis and was selected as Indiana Poet Laureate 2008-10. Photo: Immigrant children are seen at a tent city in Tornillo, Texas, on June 18.) (CNS photo/Mike Blake, Reuters)

Make our country and people great again.
Was this not once the Promised Land?
Jesus says ICE will make us pure again.

Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan priests serving our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in *The Criterion*. Order priests and religious sisters and brothers are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.

BEATTY, Matthew T., 37, St. Matthew the Apostle, Indianapolis, June 29. Son of Joseph and Deborah Beatty. Brother of Michelle, Jason and Joe Beatty. Uncle of one.

BERGH, Roger G., Sr., 89, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, June 7. Husband of Patsy Bergh. Father of Nancy Hopkins, Virginia Houldsworth, Patricia Hrovat, Christine Schaefer, Maryane Williams, Douglas and Roger Bergh.

CARDENAS, Gerardo E., 36, St. Jude, Indianapolis, June 23. Husband of Loree Cardenas. Father of Alexis, Jahna, Savannah, Christian and Jason Cardenas.

CARMER, Mason M., infant, Immaculate Conception, Millhouses, July 8. Son of Christopher Carmer and Cassandra Hellmich. Brother of Maya Hellmich. Grandson of Phillip Hellmich, Karen Hellmich, Marshall and Patti Palmer and Crystal Pennington.

COLEMAN, Jay E., 49, Holy Angels, Indianapolis, June 11. Father of Vance Coleman. Brother of Ashley Hunt, Delise and DeLyn Coleman.

COMBS, Rosalie A. (Moran), 84, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, July 6. Mother of Rebecca Newby and Maria Combs. Sister of Julia Eppen and Richard Moran. Half-sister of James Moran.

CORNELL, Ron, 73, St. John the Apostle, Bloomington, June 28. Father of Ronda Generaux, Jerri Riggle, Robert Allen, Catherine and Jason Cornell. Brother of Nancy Kusmaul. Grandfather of several.

DYSON, Cary, 69, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, July 4. Brother of Dwight Dyson.

GROTE, Catherine D., 89, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, July 2. Mother of Lisa Gading, Angela Norrick and Bryan Grote. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of seven.

HARBESON, Carol R., 86, St. Mary, Lanesville, June 30. Mother of Lynn Harbeson. Sister of Glenn and Nicholas Keinsley. Grandmother of two.

HILLEN, Madonna, 88, St. Mary, North Vernon, June 28. Sister of Ann Matern. Aunt and great-aunt of several.

JOHNSON, E' Austin B. II, 82, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, July 3. Husband of Amada Reyes Johnson. Father of Maria Johnson-Agtuca, Maria Johnson-Galang, Caroline and Eric Johnson. Brother of Corazon Tan, Maria Trinidad, Maria, E' Austin III, E' Austin IV, E' Austin V and Samuel Johnson. Grandfather of six.

JONES, Susan M., 50, Our Lady of Lourdes, Indianapolis, June 30. Wife of Todd Jones. Mother of Alaria Jordan, Alexis and Michael Jones. Sister of LeeAnn Williams. Grandmother of one.

LANDERS, Mary L., 96, Holy Angels, Indianapolis, June 27. Aunt of several.

MEIR, Angela, infant, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, June 30. Daughter of Chris Meir and Ana Gomez Moncada. Sister of Edward Meir.

MEISBERGER, Richard G., 85, St. Roch, Indianapolis, June 30. Husband of Carolyn Meisberger. Father of Linda Arthur, Lisa Griesemer, Martin and Thomas Meisberger. Brother of Margaret Gregory, Doris Tuccio and Carl Meisberger. Grandfather of seven.

MEYER, George J., 91, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, July 4. Father of Georgette Langholz. Brother of Margaret Loudenbeck, Alice Rhodes and Rita Stumborg.

PRICKEL, Terry J., 62, St. Louis, Batesville, July 5. Father of Carmen Davis and Aaron Prickel. Brother of Pat Hill, Janet Schumacher and Ron Prickel. Grandfather of four.

RICHARDSON, Charles, 91, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, June 30. Husband of Judy Richardson. Brother of Barbara Parker, Jay, Mark and Ross Richardson. Stepfather of Theresa Cox. Grandfather of 12. Great-grandfather of five.

RYNARD, Patricia A., 85, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, May 19. Mother of Nancy Ohler, Mary, John, Joseph and R. Michael Rynard. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of 17.

SIZEMORE, Elizabeth, 93, All Saints, Dearborn County, June 28. Mother of Barb Pope, Debbie Shell, Greg and Mike



Laying to rest a cardinal

Pope Francis uses incense to bless the casket of French Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran during his funeral Mass in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on July 12. Cardinal Tauran, who announced the election of Pope Francis, had a long career as a Vatican diplomat and later worked on interreligious dialogue. He died on July 5 at the age of 75 in Hartford, Conn. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Sizemore. Grandmother of 15. Great-grandmother of 22.

STRAYHORN-DAVIS, B. Beatrice, 78, Holy Angels, Indianapolis, June 27. Wife of Theodore Davis. Mother of Shalonda Davis-Fernandez and Stacia Davis-Hill. Sister of Dorothy Murrell, Claude Jr. and Neale Strayhorn. Grandmother of three.

SUBLETTE, Theresa M., 54, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, May 13. Wife of Mark Sublette. Mother of Jacqueline, Jennifer, Matthew and Michael Sublette. Daughter of William and Sharon Johnson. Sister of Pam Ernsting, Kenneth, Kevin and William Johnson.

TAMLIN, Margaret E., 91, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, June 30. Mother of Susan, David and Robin Tamlin. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of 17. Great-great-grandmother of five.

VAN DER SCHANS, Kathleen (Williams), 52, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, June 28. Wife of Raymond Van der Schans. Mother of Mackenzie and William Van der Schans. Daughter of Donald and Joanne Williams. Sister of Judy, Ken, Larry, Michael and Rick Williams.

WATERS, Bernard R., 92, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, July 3. Husband of Dorothy Waters. Father of Debbie Fulcher and Jeff Waters. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of eight. †

Providence Sister Maureen Ann McCarthy served in Catholic education for 42 years

Providence Sister Maureen Ann McCarthy died on July 6 at Providence Hall at Union Hospital in Terre Haute. She was 89.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on July 12 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the motherhouse in St. Mary-of-the-Woods. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Sister Maureen Ann was born on Aug. 23, 1928, in Chicago. She entered the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods on Feb. 2, 1947, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1952.

Sister Maureen Ann earned a bachelor's degree from Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College in St. Mary-of-the-Woods and a master's degree from Indiana State University in Terre Haute.

During her 71 years as a member of the Sisters of Providence, Sister Maureen Ann ministered for 42 years as a teacher in Catholic schools in Indiana, Illinois, Maryland, North Carolina and Texas.

In the archdiocese, she served in Catholic education at St. Paul School in Sellersburg from 1950-51, and in Indianapolis at St. Anthony School from 1951-54 and St. Philip Neri School from 1957-58. Sister Maureen also served at the motherhouse as a driver from 1972-73, 1982-85 and 1997-2018. She also served in the business office at the motherhouse from 1975-76.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876. †

Patricia Ann Beidelman, 78, mother of Father Patrick Beidelman, died on July 5

Patricia Ann (Casey) Beidelman, the mother of Father Patrick Beidelman, executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Worship and Evangelization and rector of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis, died on July 5 at Franciscan Hospice House in Indianapolis.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on July 9 at Holy Spirit Church in Indianapolis. Burial followed at Holy Cross Cemetery in Indianapolis.

Beidelman was born on Aug. 12, 1939, in Indianapolis. She grew up as a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. She was a student at Our Lady of Lourdes School and was a member of the first graduating class of Father Thomas Seccina Memorial High School in Indianapolis in 1957.

In 1959, she married her husband,

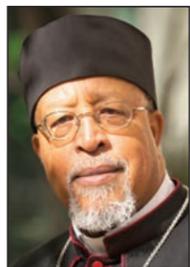
Robert, who died in 2006. She is survived by her sons, Kerry Beidelman, Michael Beidelman, Father Patrick Beidelman and Stephen Beidelman, all of Indianapolis, six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

In addition to living as a faithful wife and helping to raise her children, Beidelman enjoyed welcoming her large extended family as well as strangers who needed encouragement into her home on Indianapolis' east side. She also worked as a teacher's aide at Sunny Heights Elementary School and at Warren Early Childhood Center, both in Indianapolis.

At the time of her death, she was a member of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis, where she had been a parishioner for more than 50 years.

Memorial gifts may be sent to Holy Spirit Parish, 7243 E. 10th St., Indianapolis 46219. †

Ethiopian cardinal praises his nation's peace deal with Eritrea



Cardinal Berhaneyesus Souraphiel

NAIROBI, Kenya (CNS)—Ethiopia's Catholic Cardinal Berhaneyesus Souraphiel commended the Ethiopian and Eritrean governments for signing a peace accord.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Eritrean President

Isaias Afwerki signed the peace pact in the Eritrean capital, Asmara, on July 9.

Cardinal Souraphiel told Catholic News Service (CNS) on July 10: "This is a historic step taken by the prime minister of Ethiopia within the first 100 days since he took office. The joyous reception of Eritreans to the Ethiopian prime minister and his delegation shows that this has been the prayers of the people. It is very pleasing to the Catholic Church that the prayers of the people of both countries have been answered."

For decades, the two countries have been at loggerheads on issues that include the border. An estimated 80,000 people

are believed to have been killed between 1998-2000 over a fierce border conflict. However, after the two countries signed a U.N.-brokered border agreement in 2000, they failed to implement it.

Cardinal Souraphiel said the "steps taken so far by both governments prove that Africans have the wisdom to solve their problems themselves. The Catholic Church will continue to pray both for Ethiopia and Eritrea."

On June 26, speaking in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as Eritrean government officials arrived in the country, Cardinal Souraphiel noted that Catholics had been praying for

peace since the conflict started.

"Even though it was not easy, the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ethiopia and Eritrea continued to meet and exchange notes on the pastoral concerns of the two conflicting countries," he said.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres also praised the leaders on the signing of the peace pact.

The reconciliation was "illustrative of a new wind of hope blowing across Africa," he told reporters in the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa, stressing that sanctions imposed on Eritrea might become obsolete after the deal. †

FRANCE

continued from page 1

work fine, but his lower legs and feet don't move at all. He has feeling in his lower legs and can feel his feet if we grab them and squeeze.

"The bones of his spine need to heal. Until that happens, he's in a great deal of pain, and he can't sit upright."

Msgr. Mark Svarczkopf, pastor of Our Lady of the Greenwood, has provided the family with not just spiritual support, but empathy as well.

"I told [Amy], when I was Alex's age I broke my back in exactly the same place," he says. "It's life changing. I don't do all the things I did before the accident. It changed me. An injury like that does affect you the rest of your life."

'The miracles just keep unfolding'

Yet the Kalscheurs—Amy, husband Michael and their seven additional children ranging in age from 9-22—see God's presence in the midst of the chaos.

"The amazing thing is, he didn't have a scratch on his body except on an elbow, which happened after the fall," Kalschur says. "The doctors said he landed as if cradled."

"The miracles just keep unfolding," she adds. "The doctors in France tend not to be so optimistic [in general], yet his doctors are saying he will walk. They don't know if he'll have full capability, and it will be a struggle, but they are optimistic."

Other blessings, she says, include the presence of two doctors at the party who were able to assist Alex during the 30 minutes it took for the ambulance to arrive. Additionally, through a series of connections, a friend of Kalschur's knew of a doctor who lives a 20-minute walk from Alex's hospital. When she heard of the Kalscheurs' plight, the doctor invited Amy and Michael to stay with her as long as necessary. Michael returned home on July 16, while Amy will stay with Alex until he can return home.

Being able to receive the Eucharist

daily has been a blessing, too, says Amy Kalschur.

"He loves the Mass," she says, noting that Alex trains altar servers at Our Lady of the Greenwood and serves as a master of ceremonies for weekend Masses there.

"He's the type of kid who, if for some reason we go to Mass at noon, he'll go back a second time to emcee at 6 p.m. [Mass]. If they need servers, he'll [serve] two Masses. He has a love for the Mass that I think one rarely sees in someone his age. He's a very spiritual person. His love for Christ is so great."

'We hope we get Alex home soon'

Kalschur says the outpouring of prayers and support from their parish, family, friends and even strangers has been "overwhelming."

Yet there are still practical and logistical issues to manage—primarily, getting Alex home to recover.

"We want him to receive rehabilitation in the States," she says. "But he needs to be able to sit upright [on a commercial airline]—which he can't because of his injuries—or take a medical flight, which is \$75,000 to \$100,000. And then we need to have medical attendants on the way home because lots of things could happen."

Here, too, people have stepped up to help. A GoFundMe campaign was started online, and Our Lady of the Greenwood will sell baked goods after each Mass on July 21 and 22.

One particular parish ministry is coordinating several efforts to help the Kalscheurs. Agape Performing Arts Company produces amateur youth plays and musicals with a focus on developing cooperation and community among all involved.

Tracey Rollison, Agape's community relations director, says the Kalschur family "has been very involved with us," from several siblings acting and stage managing, to Amy serving as treasurer.

"[Alex is] kind of one of our own," she continues. "He is really one of the best people I know. The whole family are just perpetually happy people. It's definitely rooted in their strong Catholic faith. It's



From his hospital bed in France, Alex Kalschur, 18 and a member of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, holds two rosaries he touched to a relic at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris on July 6. They were still in his pocket later the same day when he fell 30 feet, fracturing one vertebrae and destroying another. (Submitted photo)

the peace of God they all have.

"We hope we get Alex back home soon."

To help make that happen, the ministry is accepting donations and cards for Alex at all performances of their current production, *Oliver the Musical*. They worked with a Greenwood location of Firehouse Subs to donate 20 percent of its sales on July 26. And one Agape couple is coordinating a dinner and dance at the parish on July 28. (See related story on this page for more information on fundraising efforts for Alex's transportation and medical costs.)

When asked about such support, Kalschur pauses to stifle her tears.

"It's overwhelming to me, the generosity of others," she says, her voice choked with emotion.

'Faith has been so crucial'

Efforts from family and friends to raise funds are not all that give hope to the Kalscheurs. Their faith sustains them day in and day out.

"Jesus said himself he healed [the blind

man] so that the glory of God might be shown," says Kalschur, referring to John 9:3. "That verse stuck with me. It's so powerful."

"And after my husband finished praying a rosary by Alex's bedside, he felt a large hand on his shoulder, and he felt peace. That one moment is carrying Michael."

Faith is helping Alex's siblings as well. "Faith has been so crucial," says his 21-year-old sister Olivia Kitchell, a member of St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis. After receiving the news of her brother's accident, she and her husband immediately prayed the rosary.

"The first and only thing we could do was pray," she says. "It's necessary just to trust, because there is absolutely nothing we can do."

And while she notes that her own prayers are "meaningful," Kitchell says the "amazing outpouring of grace and hope from the community just blows me away. We have friends who have offered Masses, priest friends who have [celebrated] Masses. That firestorm of prayer, I think, is what's making this so much easier on the family."

Her mother agrees, and sees in this hardship an opportunity to share God's goodness.

"Yes, there's the money side of this [story]," Amy says. "But to share the story of faith is what's most important."

"We're not the only ones [in the world] who are suffering, and we have to be careful not to think we're alone in our suffering. We all suffer together, and the glory is that when we suffer with Christ, we can rise with him." †

Want to help Alex's family get him home? Here's how

- www.gofundme.com/982pa-bring-alex-home.

- Bake sales after all Masses on July 21 and 22 at Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., in Greenwood; Masses are celebrated at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, and 8 a.m., 10 a.m., noon, 1:30 p.m. and 6 p.m. on July 22.

- Donations and cards accepted at all showings of *Oliver the Musical*, produced by the Agape Performing Arts Company of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish. Show times are 7:30 p.m. on July 20 and 21, and 3:30 p.m. on July 22 at the Knights of Columbus' McGowan Hall, 1305 N. Delaware, in Indianapolis. Tickets range in cost from \$5-15 and are available at thelittleboxoffice.com/agape.

- On July 26 at the Firehouse Subs at 884 N. U.S. 31, in Greenwood, mention the effort to help the Kalschur (KAL-shur) family when purchasing food for dine-in, carry-out or catering,

and the restaurant will donate 20 percent of those sales to the cause.

- Dinner, Dance and Silent Auction at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 S. Meridian St., in Greenwood, from 6-11 p.m. on July 28. A spaghetti dinner will be served from 6-7:30 p.m., with dancing and a silent auction to follow. Admission is free. The dinner is optional and costs \$10 per person, with a maximum of \$50 per family. All attending the event are asked to register online at bit.ly/2NRjxAZ (case sensitive). Separate registrations are available for those purchasing dinner and those not. There is no deadline to register, although only 400 tickets are available. For more information or to donate items for the silent auction, contact Marcy Renken at 317-489-1557 or sgtrenken@hotmail.com.

- The family also welcomes prayers and the offering of Masses. †



In honor of France winning the World Cup on July 15, nurses treated Michael, left, Amy and Alex Kalschur to champagne in the hospital in France where Alex, a member of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, is recuperating after falling 30 feet on July 6, fracturing one vertebrae and destroying another. (Submitted photo)

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1969 City Kickball Champions

This photo shows the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) city champion kickball team from St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg in 1969. The St. Malachy CYO also won the "CYO of the Year" contest that same year. St. Malachy Parish was founded in 1869, and included this photo, along with many others, in a parish history book commemorating its centennial.

(Would you like to comment on or share information about this photo? Contact archdiocesan archivist Julie Motyka at 800-382-9836, ext. 1538; 317-236-1538; or by e-mail at jmotyka@archindy.org.)

U.S. advocates say Christians in Myanmar's Kachin state need help

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The Tamadaw, the military of Myanmar, has been attacking the ethnic minority Kachin people in what some observers are calling a genocide.

Although much attention has been given to the ethnic Rohingya, "If you ask the Kachin if they believe a genocide is taking place, everyone will tell you yes," said the Rev. Bob Roberts, senior pastor at Northwood Church in Dallas, who recently visited Myanmar.

In Kachin state, which is more than 90 percent Baptist and about 5 percent Catholic, the Tamadaw has burned 406 villages and 311 churches and displaced more than 130,000 people in the past seven years.

"These are gut-wrenching acts," said Nicolee Ambrose, spokeswoman for the Interfaith Coalition to Stop Genocide in Burma.

The motivation for the attacks is an ongoing conflict that started almost as soon as Burma, now Myanmar, gained its independence from Britain in 1948.

The government of Myanmar views the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), which Rev. Roberts described as "for the most part, a defensive organization," as a terrorist group.

Despite this, the KIA, along with other ethnic armed groups, was invited to a government-sponsored peace conference on July 11-16.

Ambrose described a trip to a camp for internally displaced Kachin, where she met women and children who were victims of violence. Fifty-two percent of women who had survived attacks on villages had been raped, she said.

"It's first an ethnic problem and second a religious problem," said Rev. Roberts, although he said that religion did play a role in the attacks.

Since the vast majority of the Kachin are Christians, the Tamadaw goes out of its way to attack churches, said Sut Nau Ndayu, the president of the Kachin National Organization USA.

"Churches are the core of the community. When the military personnel come and destroy churches, they destroy the people's hope and safety and shatter their mentality. That's what they're aiming for," he said.

The Christians are easy targets because they tend to flee to churches, said Rev. Roberts.

"Every single church there is a refugee center, and the shelters they provide are basically bamboo with tarps," Rev. Roberts said.

Ndayu also said the military is harassing camps for displaced people, using human shields and blocking all humanitarian aid to the camps.

Rev. Roberts said the Christians in Kachin expect the United States will do something for them.

He said that, while he was visiting Kachin, "One of the things that made me sad was that they would ask again and again, 'Where are the American Christians?'"

The Kachin feel a special connection to American Christianity, he said, because the vast majority of them are Baptists, whose ancestors had been converted by Adoniram Judson, U.S. missionary to Burma in the early 1800s.

Ambrose said the lifting of all sanctions on Myanmar in 2016 led to the Tamadaw increasing the number and ferocity of their attacks in Kachin.

"Ben Rhodes [a former deputy national security adviser for strategic communications] and [then-president] Barack Obama thought the way to hasten the creation of democracy in Burma was to lift sanctions, but lifting sanctions took away Aung San Suu Kyi's one stick she could use to control the military."

Suu Kyi is the head of the civilian government of Myanmar, but the military has substantial power: It controls 25 percent of the seats in parliament and about 75 percent of the economy.

"We believe the lifting of American sanctions gave license to the military for genocidal campaigns and halted democratic reforms," Ambrose said.

Ambrose, Rev. Roberts and Ndayu all called for the United States to place sanctions against Myanmar again.

In Myanmar, ucanews.com reported Bishop Francis Daw Tang of Myitkyina, in Kachin state, has called for a halt to fighting in order to allow dialogue.

The bishop told ucanews.com that both sides need to compromise to reduce violence and implement provisions of the 1947 Panglong agreement regarding self-determination and minority rights. †

Serra Club Vocations Essay

Student's late grandfather, a deacon, showed how to lead by example

By Sarah Gray

Special to *The Criterion*

The contemporary American entrepreneur Anne Wojcicki once said that "the reality is that the only way change comes is when you lead by example."

Leadership is a necessary skill for disciples to have. Leading by example is exactly what priests, deacons, nuns, brothers and even lay members must do to show Christ to others.

Deacons are especially helpful and active members of the Church. One specific deacon who used leading by example to change my life was my grandfather, Deacon Ronald Stier. Deacon Ron Stier not only led an openly holy life in the Church, but also a personal one within our family. My grandpa changed me to become a better person through his obvious love and example of service.

Deacon Ron was a disciple of Christ. He showed this quality through his unconditional love for everyone. My grandpa had a large family, and he loved us all more than anything. When he first became a deacon, he came home and gave us all a blessing.

As a young child, this had a huge impression on me. I thought my grandfather was the most amazing person alive. I bragged about him to all of my friends. He blessed our Bibles, rosaries, and other items. He persuaded me to pray more than anyone else. My grandpa made creating a relationship with God fun and easy to understand. He shaped my prayer routine, and made me who I am today.

My grandpa loved his family so much, and showed it all the time. By loving

us, he showed us the love of Jesus. With every sacrifice he made for his family, he emulated Christ's sacrifice for us. That is what made him such a great disciple. Deacon Ron's actions have showed me how to love others and treat them with respect.

He also affected my life by his acts of service. This was a major way he led by example. My grandpa used to deliver Communion to various places, including nursing homes and even the jail. Here, he led by example.

Since he passed away, my other grandma has become an extraordinary minister of holy Communion who brings the Eucharist to homebound members of the parish. I am also now considering becoming an extraordinary minister of holy Communion.

This goes to show that my grandfather's selfless actions have an effect on various people. Even when he was ill, my grandpa did his best to serve the Church. This was especially inspiring to me. Though my grandpa was struggling himself, he still constantly thought of others.

Deacon Ron Stier was a disciple of Christ through his love and service. He changed my life and many others for the better.

Leadership is an excellent trait to have, and my grandpa was naturally an incredible leader. His examples showed me the correct way to live. Leading by example is the only way to change lives, and that is exactly what my grandfather did.

(Sarah and her parents, Vince and Denise Gray, are members of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Richmond. She completed the 12th grade at Seton Catholic High School in Richmond last spring, and is the 12th-grade division winner in the Indianapolis Serra Club's 2018 John D. Kelley Vocations Essay Contest.) †



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